PLANTING IDEAS • BEAUTIFUL GARDENS • EXPERT ADVICE

GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

HIGH DESIGN

Tom Stuart-Smith
transforms a historic walled garden

The coastal garden
inspired by Gilles Clément

BEAUTIFUL POTS
for high summer

KITTED OUT
Choosing stylish garden workwear

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EDITOR'S LETTER

The cliff-top garden we feature in Devon this month is inspired by the work of Gilles Clément. Botanist, landscape designer, artist and pioneering gardener, Clément coined the phrase *le jardin en mouvement*, or moving garden, to describe the ongoing push of nature on a garden's design and asked where, specifically, a gardener should insert himself in this process.

Designer Duncan Nuttall and gardener Will Cumberlidge have designed a space in sync with its surroundings of the Devon landscape and the seascape beyond. The planting has a beautiful aesthetic with a coastal slant, using plants such as *Hylotelephium telephium* subsp. *ruprechtii*, *Perovskia* 'Blue Spire' and *Eryngium agavifolium* that are attuned to the salt-laden spray. Away from the seashore shrubs with inherently jagged forms, such as *Myrtus communis* and *Teucrium fruticans*, are underplanted with perennials and grasses that blur in the wind, mimicking the rocky coastline and the movement of the sea. Steps and rock pools have been carefully carved into the rocks around existing plants and lichens on the way to the seashore. For Clément, the gardener's intervention is not just advisable, but central, and Duncan and Will have intervened with a subtle hand.

In North Yorkshire, Tom Stuart-Smith reconsiders the historic walled garden at Middleton Lodge with planting that combines naturalism with the British tradition of intensely decorative, colour-themed borders. Repeating grasses and flowering perennials, such as *Lythrum salicaria* 'Swirl' and *Salvia nemorosa* 'Amethyst', form lines and pools of colour that peak throughout the year, and the garden is threaded with meandering pathways. More formal than much of Tom's work it was planted and is expertly gardened by head gardener Andrew Webb.

In Kitted Out this month we highlight practical and purposeful gardening workwear, from footwear to waxed aprons, boilersuits to wet-weather gear. With an emphasis on items that are British-made, there's something for stylish gardeners everywhere.

I hope you enjoy the issue,

Lucy Bellamy

LUCY BELLAMY, EDITOR

EVA NEMETH

Discover how designer Tom Stuart-Smith transformed this historic walled garden at Middleton Lodge, page 36.

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Duncan Nuttall's design for a cliff-top garden in south Devon is inspired by the ideas of Gilles Clément, page 44.

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Middleton Lodge by Eva Nemeth

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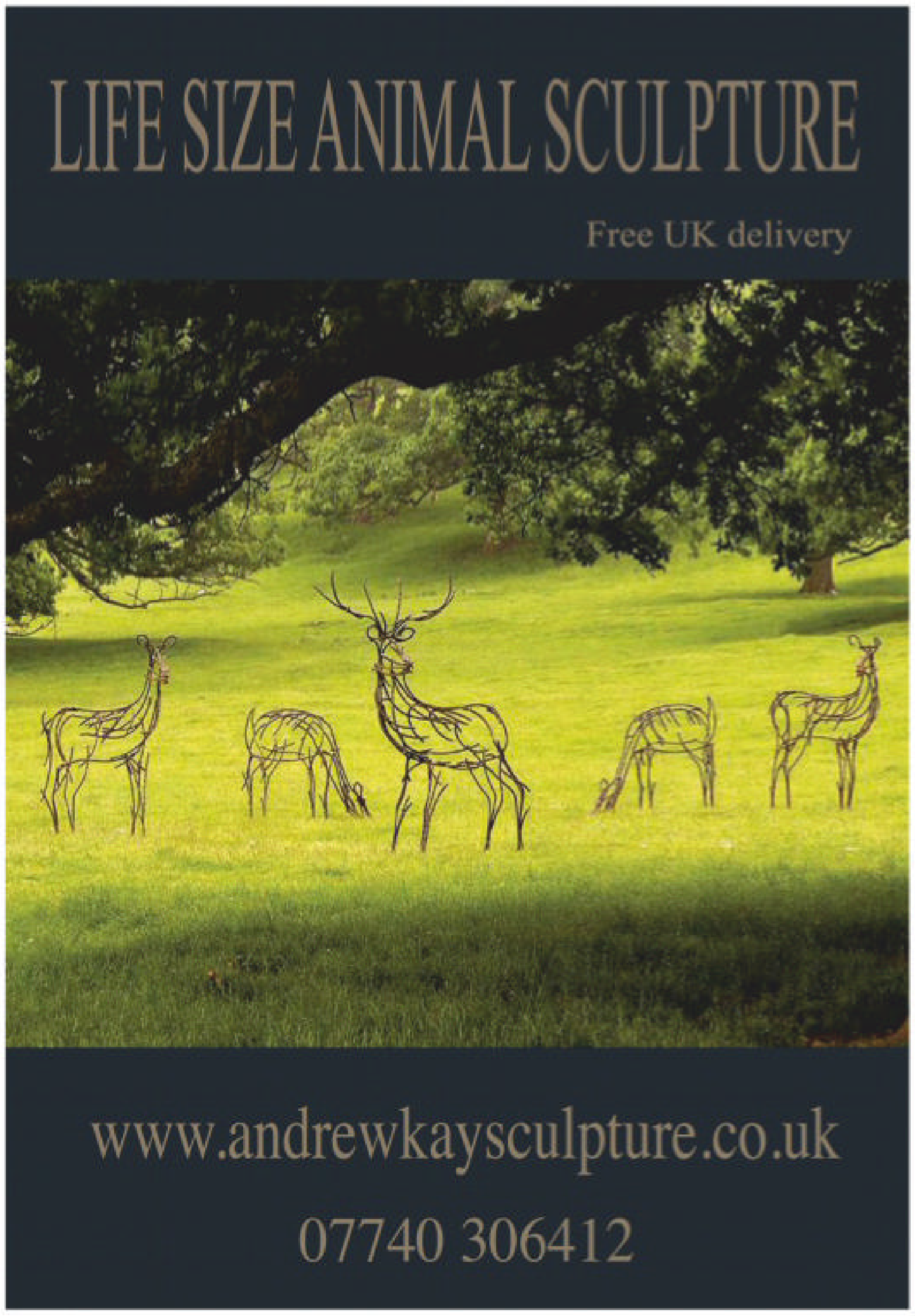
- Save 30% on tickets for the Landscape and Garden conference at I Maestri del Paesaggio in Bergamo, Italy – page 104**
- Take part in our reader survey and you could win a Crocus voucher worth £125 – page 114†

**Limited to first 20 readers, excluding previous attendees. †Reader survey is online only, and the prize is available to UK residents only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TORIE CHUGG

Torie photographs this month's plant profile, page 58. "Veronicastrums are the perfect plant to add height and elegance to a border. A firm favourite with bees and butterflies too."

HILARY BURDEN

Hilary visits a garden in New South Wales, page 82. "Carolyn's 30-year history gardening in the same region in Australia proves gardeners are at the frontline of the climate crisis."

MARINA CHRISTOPHER

Marina chooses the best veronicastrums, page 58. "These hardy perennials provide vertical accents with spires of flowers that are adored by pollinating insects."

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JAMES BASSON

James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design with his wife Helen, specialising in low-maintenance and dry gardens. He is a fervent advocate for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

FERGUS GARRETT

Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993. He is passionate about passing on his knowledge through student programmes at Dixter and worldwide lectures. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008 and an RHS Victoria Medal of Honour in 2019.

ANNA PAVORD

Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent*'s gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

DAN PEARSON

Dan is one of the UK's best-known garden designers, familiar to many through his gardening columns in the *Observer* magazine. Eight of his gardens, including the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan, have won awards and he was awarded Best in Show for his garden at Chelsea in 2015.

SARAH PRICE

Sarah is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who won worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012 and 2018, and was GMG Garden Columnist of the Year in 2016 for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.

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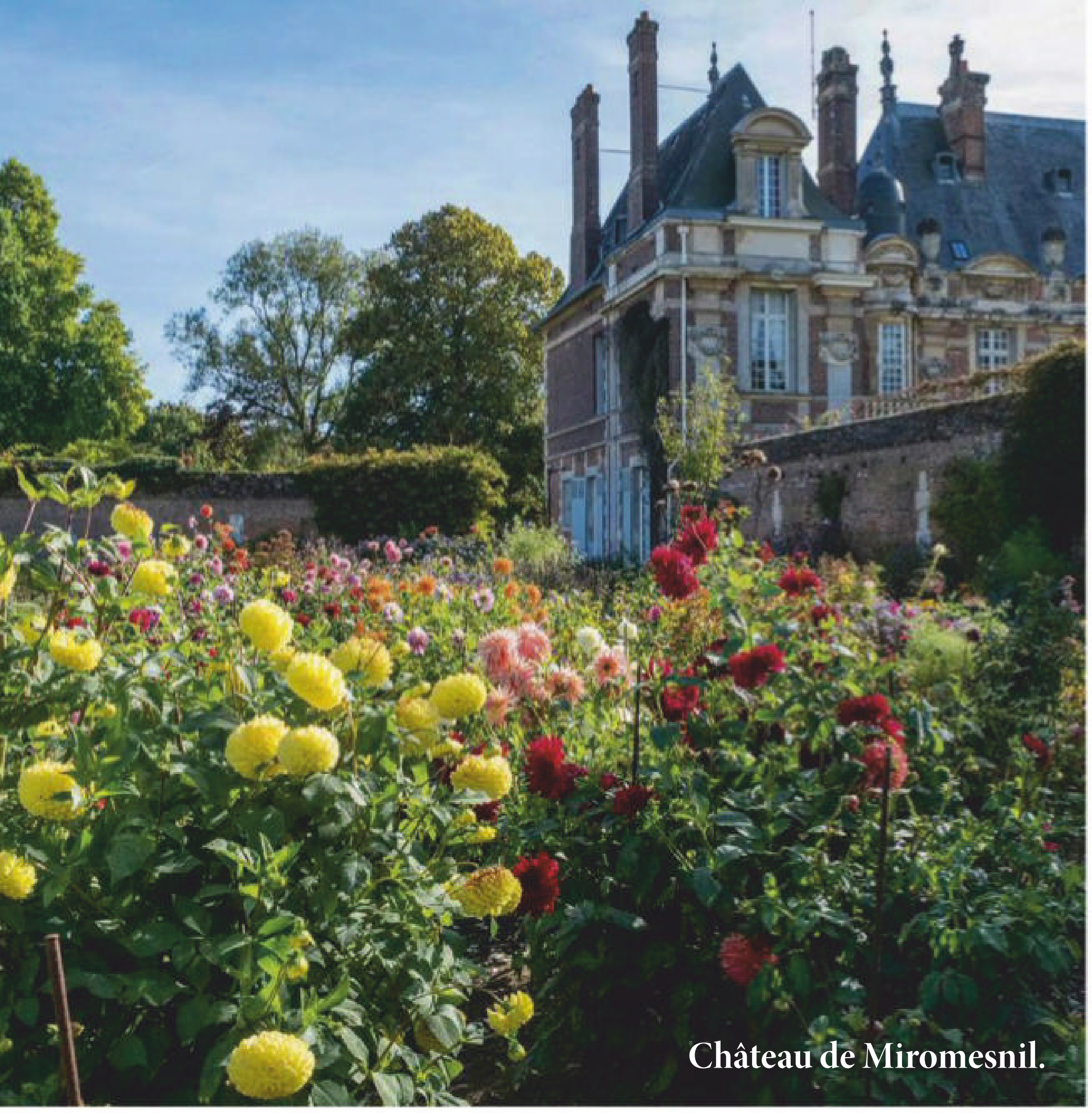
Château de Miromesnil.

Le Jardin Plume.

27-30 SEPTEMBER 2019

GARDENS OF NORMANDY

Take a long weekend to Normandy's La Côte d'Albâtre to discover exceptional gardens from the historic to the newly created

TOUR LEADER

Horticulturist **Maïté Delmas** has managed plant collections at the botanic gardens in Kew, Bordeaux and Paris. She is an active promoter of the international network Botanic Gardens of France, and was awarded the Légion d'Honneur for her 36 years of service at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturell. She is joined by Sophie Piebenga, historic gardens expert.

We travel to northern France for a four-day tour of some of Normandy's best-loved gardens. Our base in Dieppe puts us within easy reach of the village of **Varengeville-sur-Mer**, which boasts five exceptional gardens, including the gardens of **Bois des Moutiers**, a Lutyens/Jekyll collaboration where we will also be invited to view the house with a tour by the owners. **Le Vasterival** is the creation of the late Princess Greta Sturdza who created a woodland garden in the Gardenesque style. The Princess famously continued with the development of her garden right up to her death at the age of 94 in 2009. Other gardens include **Château de Miromesnil** with a charming walled potager, **Shamrock** with its remarkable collection of hydrangeas, **Jardin Agapanthe**, a densely planted garden defined by a powerful structure and **Le Jardin Plume**, where rustic charm meets French formality. As a finale to the trip, we also include a visit to an exceptional, private, modern woodland garden, which has been described as 'the most exciting new garden in Europe' – ensuring that our trip to Normandy is a delight for all garden lovers.

BOOKING DETAILS

Price per person, based on two people sharing: £2,160 (a single supplement of £200 is levied by the hotel).

Price includes: three nights accommodation at Hotel la Presidence, Mercure; three lunches, three evening meals with wine at local restaurants in Dieppe plus, return tickets on Eurostar and all transport during the tour. If you wish to travel independently to join the tour in Dieppe, please deduct £100 and contact the office to discuss joining arrangements. The price does not include hotel extras or travel insurance.

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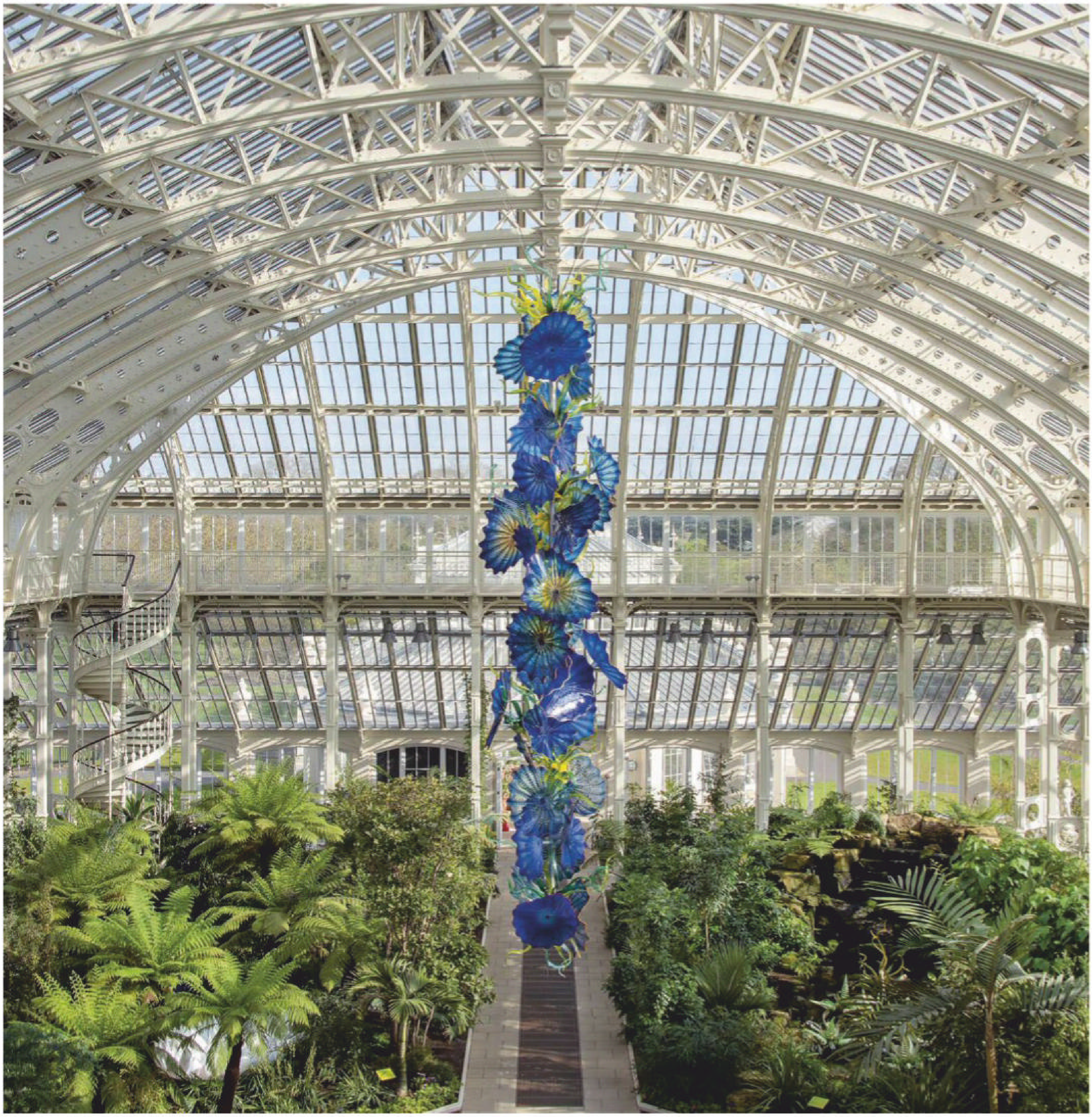
DIG IN

What's happening, where to go, what's in flower and what to buy this month



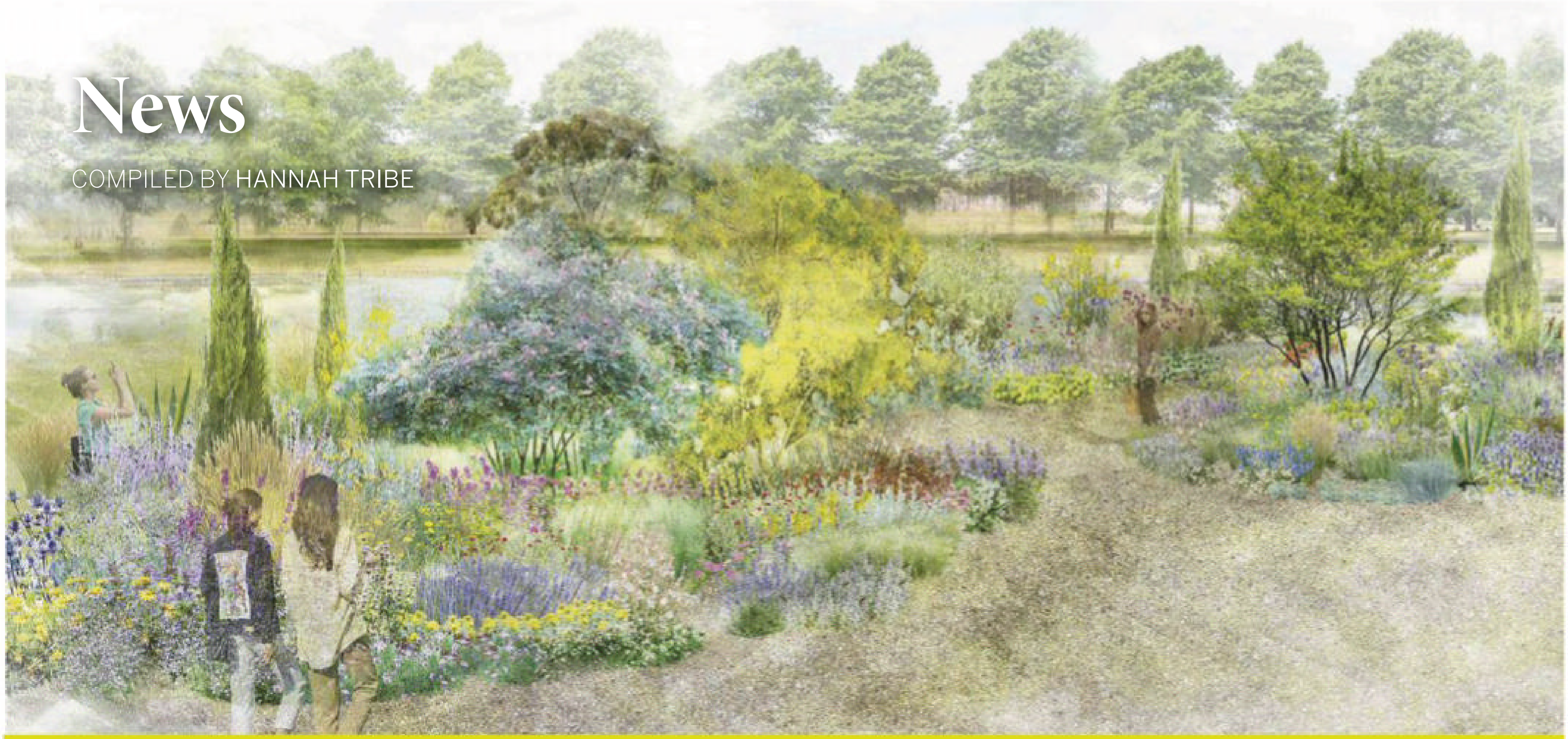
JEFF EDEN, RBG KEW

REFLECTIONS ON NATURE

Visitors to London's Victoria and Albert Museum, and New York's Rockefeller Center will be familiar with the swirling, blown-glass sculptures of Dale Chihuly. Glossy, interwoven tendrils, smooth curves and a riot of colour are the distinctive markers of a body of work made over more than 50 years in the industry. Following the success of a previous exhibition in 2005, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, is displaying 32 new installations until 27 October, including the radiantly blue, blooming sculpture (above) that hangs from the roof of the newly opened Temperate House. Admission is included with entry to the gardens. **kew.org**

News

COMPILED BY HANNAH TRIBE



It’s showtime

July is a busy month for RHS shows. At the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival (1-7 July) one of the garden hightlights will be a garden in honour of Beth Chatto (shown). Designed by David Ward, the garden and nursery director at the Beth Chatto Gardens, the garden will be planted in the ecologically sensitive style of the late, influential plantswoman with oval beds that will feature vertical and rounded plant shapes, and hardy and drought-tolerant species, including pillowy *Ceanothus* and elegant *Eucalyptus dalrympleana*. Later in the month RHS Tatton Park Flower Show (17-21 July), will be full of ideas for smaller spaces in its Back to Back show gardens, 6 x 4m plots that will be transformed into miniature garden oases. **rhs.org.uk**

SECRETS OF SCIENCE

As part of its fourth annual Science Festival, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, is launching a Fungi Quest to encourage children and adults alike to discover some of the wild fungi growing at Kew. There will be a giant fungus installation on display to introduce visitors to these unsung heroes of nearly all our ecosystems. The Festival also offers the chance to see behind the scenes at the Herbarium, and its ‘cryo corner’ will demonstrate the new cryogenic techniques used to preserve seeds. Ethnobotanist James Wong will be on hand to answer questions at panel discussions and Q&A sessions. Entry to the festival is free with garden admission tickets. 20-21 July. **kew.org**

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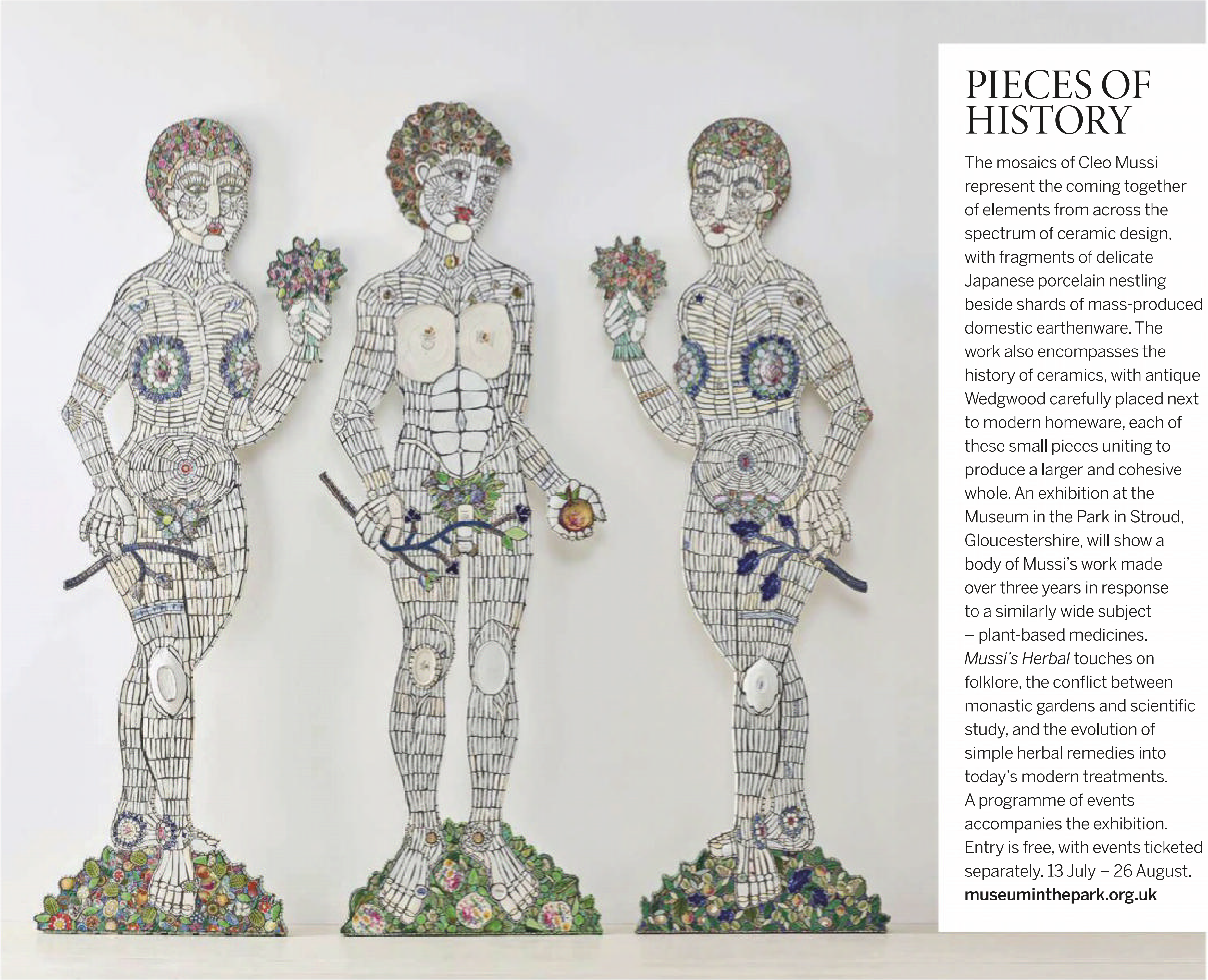

PIECES OF HISTORY

The mosaics of Cleo Mussi represent the coming together of elements from across the spectrum of ceramic design, with fragments of delicate Japanese porcelain nestling beside shards of mass-produced domestic earthenware. The work also encompasses the history of ceramics, with antique Wedgwood carefully placed next to modern homeware, each of these small pieces uniting to produce a larger and cohesive whole. An exhibition at the Museum in the Park in Stroud, Gloucestershire, will show a body of Mussi's work made over three years in response to a similarly wide subject – plant-based medicines. *Mussi's Herbal* touches on folklore, the conflict between monastic gardens and scientific study, and the evolution of simple herbal remedies into today's modern treatments. A programme of events accompanies the exhibition. Entry is free, with events ticketed separately. 13 July – 26 August. **museuminthepark.org.uk**

Cutting Edge

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Winter sun

The huge popularity of the fruit yuzu *(Citrus x junos)* has fuelled demand for winter-hardy citrus plants, and the new Japanese mandarin, *Citrus reticulata* 'Keraji', which is hardy down to -12°C fits the bill. It has shiny, deep-green foliage on almost thornless stems, and produces fragrant, auto-fertilising, white flowers. These flowers develop into flat, yellow fruits containing an orange flesh that peels easily away from the zesty skin. It produces these edible fruits in autumn and winter, providing a much-needed hit of brightness in the darker months. Available from Lubera, it costs £37.40 for a 5L pot. **lubera.co.uk**

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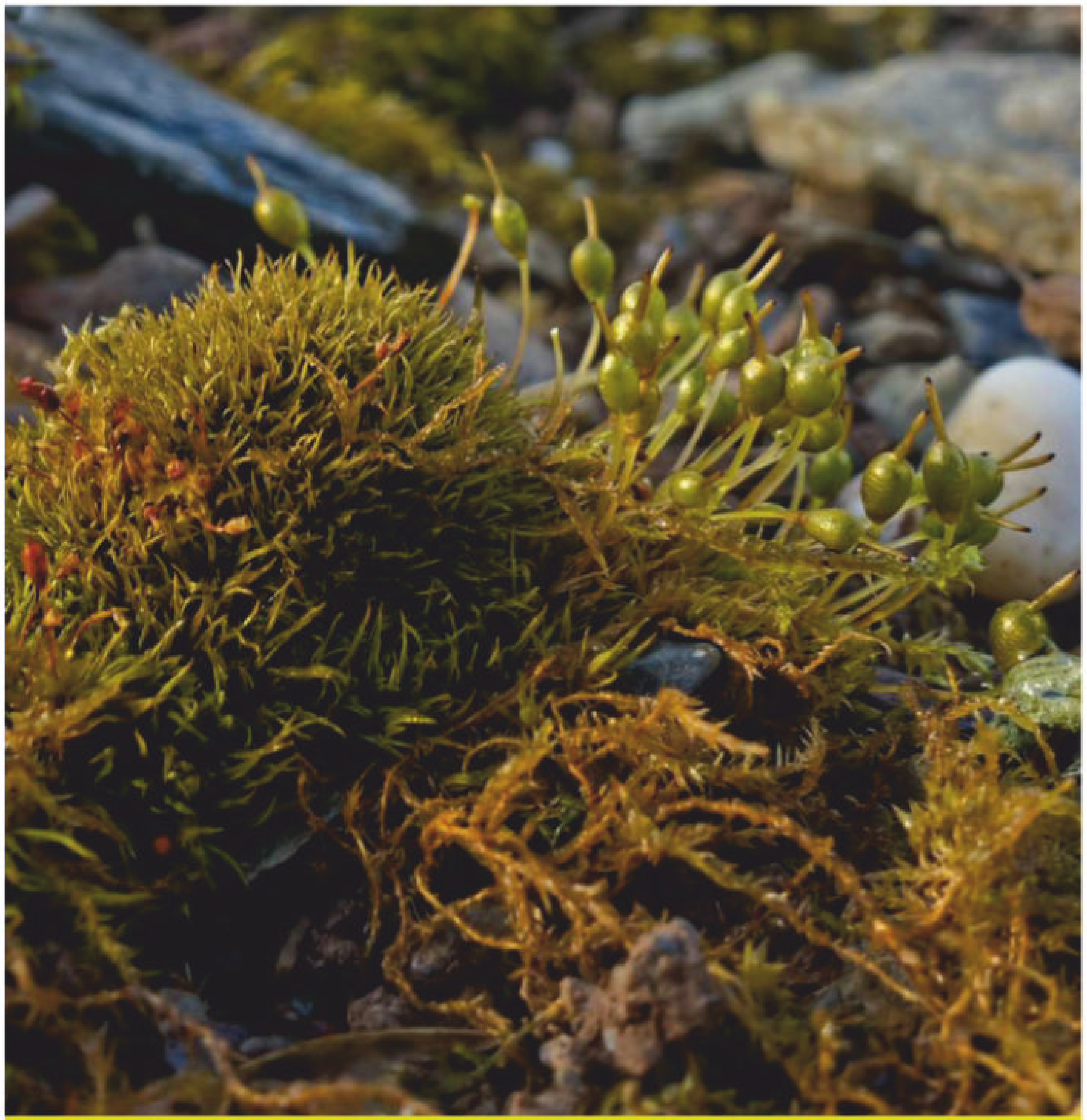

Small wonder

Researchers at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh have discovered a native moss species, *Weissia wilsonii*, that was in danger of becoming extinct. The moss, which grows to just 5mm, was first collected but incorrectly identified by William Wilson in 1836 and remained misnamed and misunderstood for almost 200 years. Now thanks to the work of the RBGE, which is one of the world's first Botanic Gardens Conservation Accredited Advanced Conservation Practitioners, the moss can be saved from decline, which for this tiny jewel may be just in time. **rbge.org.uk**

GREAT HONOUR

The Victoria Medal of Honour (VMH) is the RHS's highest award for horticulturists. Only 63 such medals – one for every year of Queen Victoria's reign – may be held at any one time. This year, the honour was gone to Great Dixter's Fergus Garrett (shown above with Roy Lancaster). As head gardener and chief executive, Fergus has built on the legacy of the late Christopher Lloyd by maintaining the garden's high-impact displays, while extending a guiding hand to young horticulturists, who, it is hoped, will become the next generation of head gardeners and Victoria Medal of Honour holders. ***greatdixter.co.uk***

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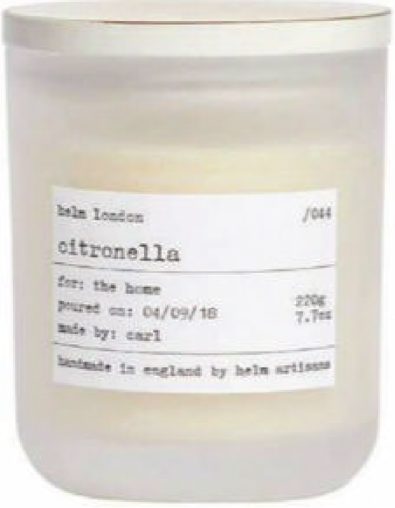
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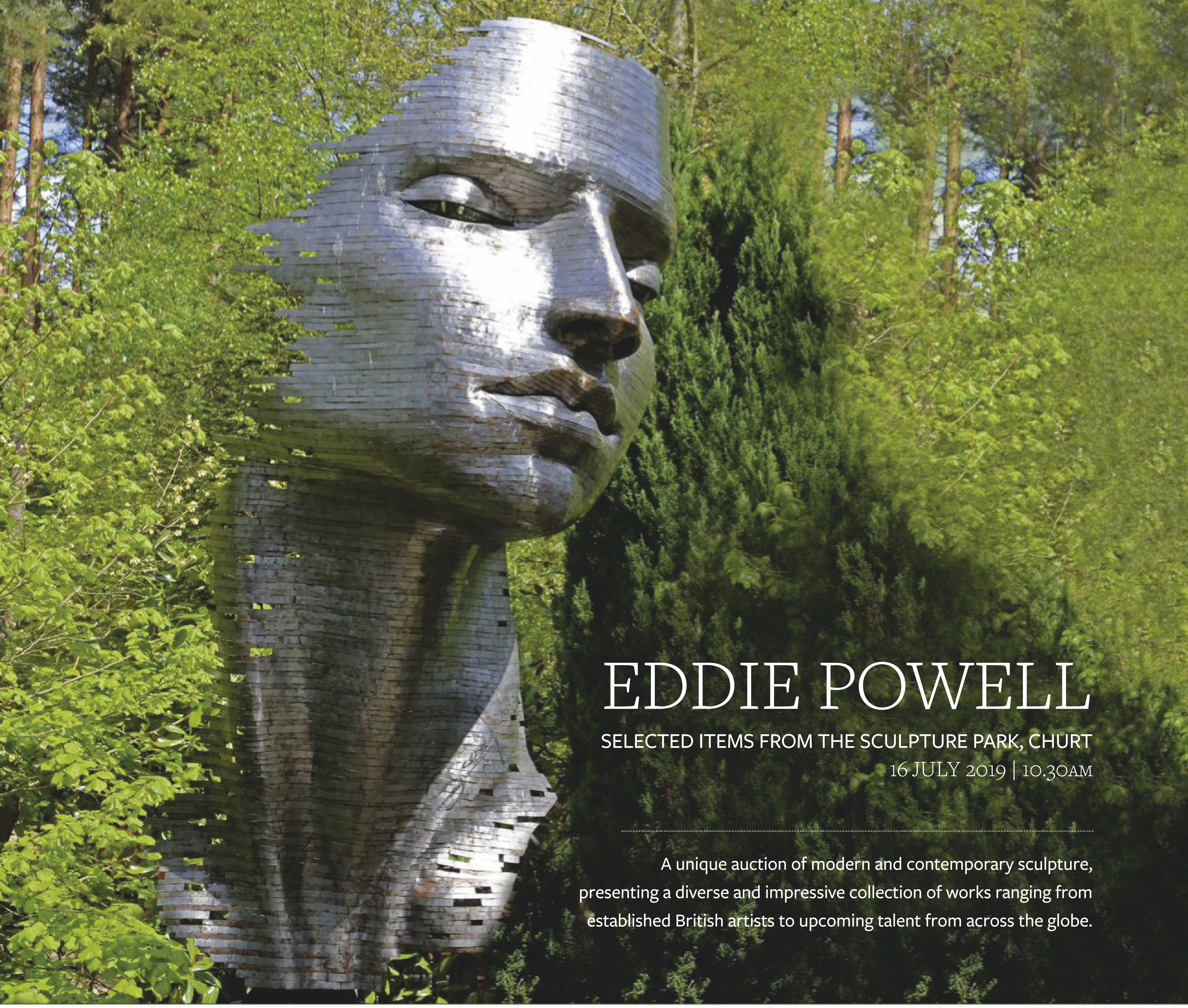

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DIARY

COMPILED BY HANNAH TRIBE AND ANNIE GATTI

❶ Sweet Pea Week at Easton Walled Gardens
This year's Sweet Pea Week at Easton Walled Gardens features trial beds of blue sweet peas, including the luscious *Lathyrus odoratus* 'North Shore'. A change in the style of planting has individual cultivars adorning their own 2.5m pillars, making it easier to spot, and smell, favourite blooms. 30 June – 7 July, 11am-4pm. £7.70. Easton Walled Gardens, Easton, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG33 5AP. Tel 01476 530063, visiteaston.co.uk

❷ Evening at Sissinghurst with Sarah Raven
Spend the evening at Sissinghurst Castle Garden with Sarah Raven and Juliet Nicolson. Following talks about the gardens accompanied by a glass of sparkling wine, there will be a chance to have a private wander around the grounds, before a three-course dinner is served at Sissinghurst's restaurant The Granary. 5 July, 6-10pm, £125. Sissinghurst Castle, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2AB. Tel 0345 092 0283, sarahraven.com

❸ National Garden Scheme Opening at Kentisbeare House
A new venue for the NGS in Devon is the garden at Kentisbeare House, Cullompton, which has been redesigned, with clipped box hedging, formal beds, a wildflower meadow and a kitchen garden. 6-7 July, 10am-5pm, £5. Kentisbeare House, Kentisbeare, Cullompton, Devon EX15 2BR. Tel 01483 213903, ngs.org.uk

❹ Festival of the Garden at Charleston
Charleston in East Sussex provides the artistic setting for a weekend of events at its Festival of the Garden. The programme has been curated by Tom Stuart-Smith and includes talks from Jinny Blom and this year's winner of Best in Show at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, Andy Sturgeon. 13-14 July, from 10am. Tickets for individual talks £12; visit the website for more ticketing options. Charleston, Firle, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 6LL. Tel 01323 811626, charleston.org.uk

❺ Stem Cutting and Propagation Workshop
Get to grips with stem cutting and propagation at Aberglasney Gardens in Wales, led by head gardener Joseph Atkin. 18 July, 10am-3pm, £55. Aberglasney Gardens, Llangathen, Carmarthenshire SA32 8QH. Tel 01558 668998, aberglasney.org

❻ Barnsdale Gardens Roses Day
Learn more about roses with writer and broadcaster Stuart Dixon at this day of informative talks and informal walks around Barnsdale Gardens. 21 July, 12-4pm. Free with garden entry. Barnsdale Gardens, The Avenue, Exton, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8AH. Tel 01572 813200, barnsdalegardens.co.uk

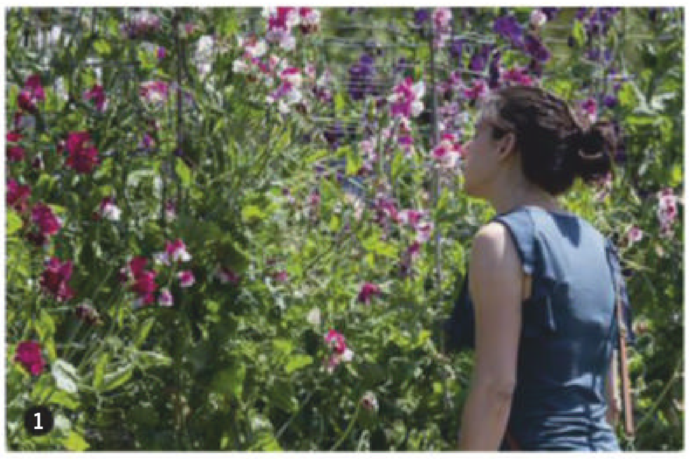
❼ Designing in the Naturalistic Style
Join grass expert Neil Lucas for a walk around his acclaimed Knoll Gardens as he explains some of the techniques that have gone into the creation of this naturalistic, wildlife-friendly space. 25 July, 2-4.30pm, £35. Knoll Gardens, Stapehill Road, Hampreston, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 7ND. Tel 01202 873931, knollgardens.co.uk

❽ Plant Hunters' Fair
Visit the Plant Hunters' Fair at the National Memorial Arboretum and find something different or special. 27 July, 10am-4pm, free. National Memorial Arboretum, Croxall Road, Alrewas, Staffordshire DE13 7AR. Tel 01270 811443, planthuntersfairs.co.uk

❾ Wildflower Identification for Improvers Course
Take your wildflower knowledge to the next level on this day course, which tackles more difficult wildflower families and botanical keys. 10 July, 10.30am-3pm, £35. National Botanic Garden of Wales, Middleton Hall, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire SA32 8HN. Tel 01558 667150, botanicgarden.wales

❿ Garden Tours with Perennial
There's a choice of two garden tours this month in aid of the horticultural charity Perennial. At Whatley Manor, head gardener Andy Spreadbury leads a tour of the garden, followed by lunch. 18 July, 10.30am-3pm, £120. At Helmingham Hall, Lady Xa Tollemache will guide guests around the extensively redesigned Grade I-listed gardens. 29 July, 11am-3pm, £75. Whatley Manor, Easton Grey, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 0RB. Helmingham Hall Gardens, Helmingham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6EF. Tel 01473 890799, perennial.org.uk

⓫ Designing a Shade Border
Book now for this one-day course on designing a shade border with nursery owner Sally Gregson. 1 September, 9.15am-5pm, £125. West Dean Gardens, West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ. Tel 01243 818210, westdean.org.uk



FRED CHOLMELEY

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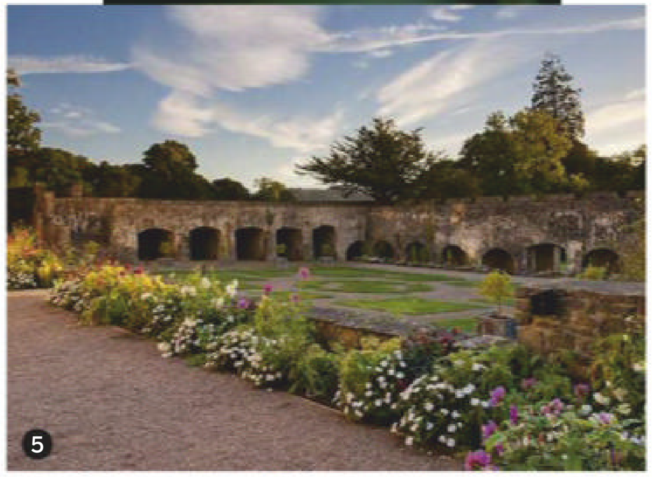
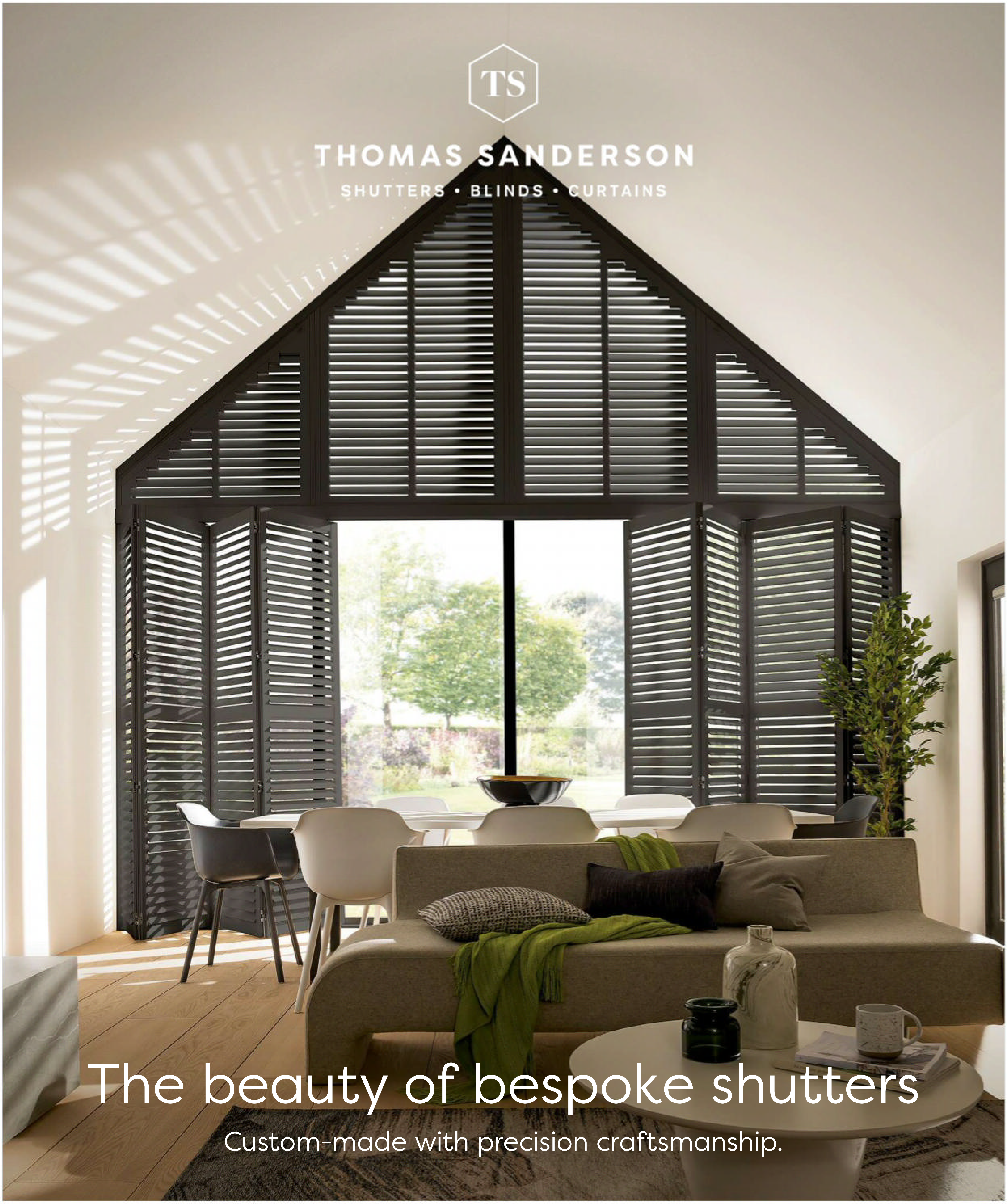


NIGEL McCALL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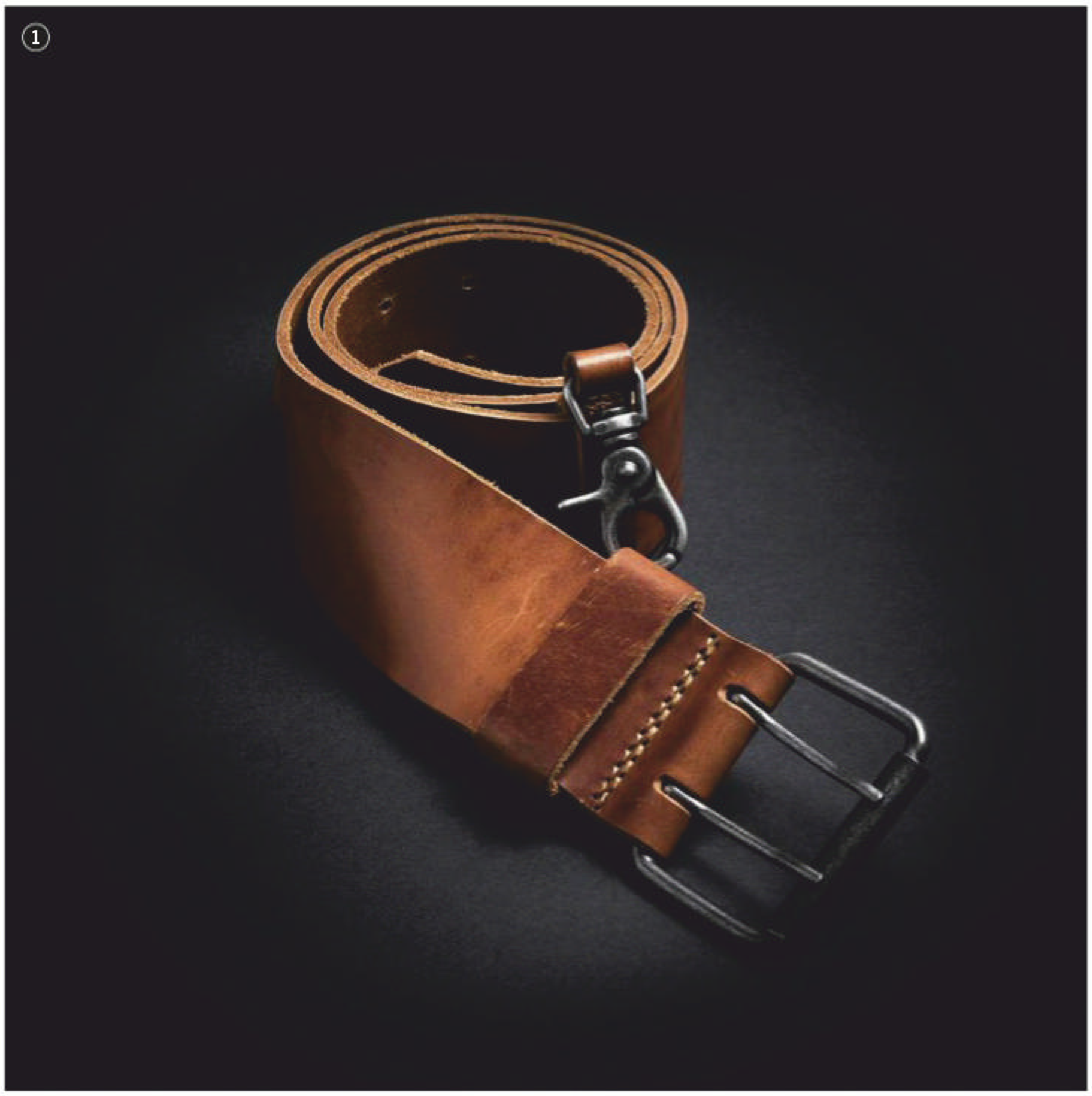

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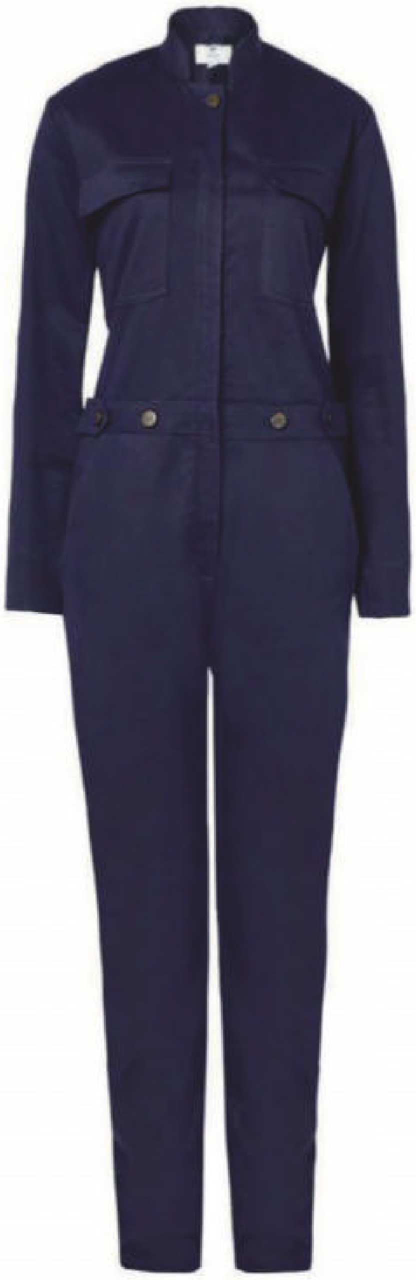

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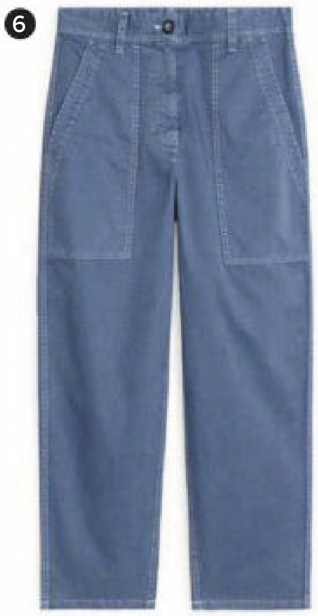

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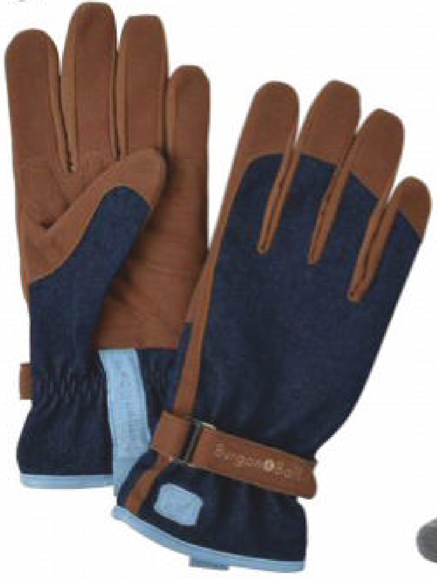

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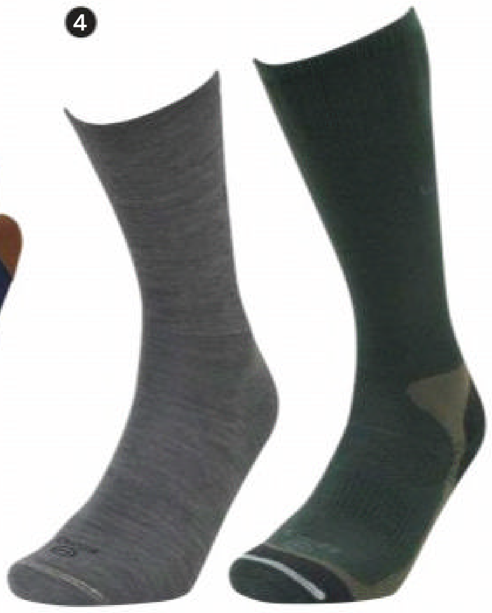

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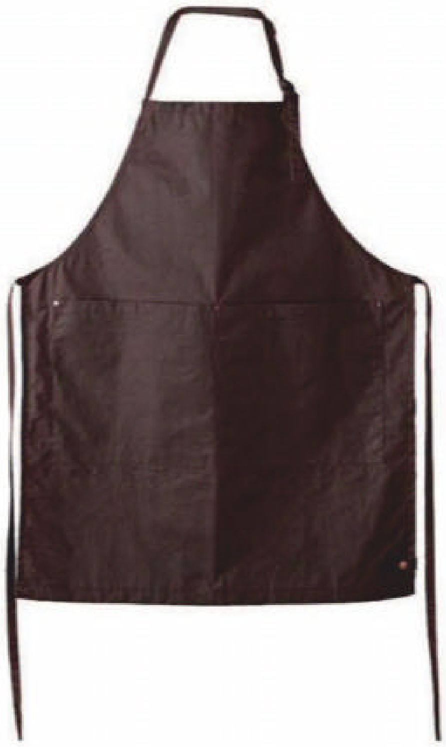

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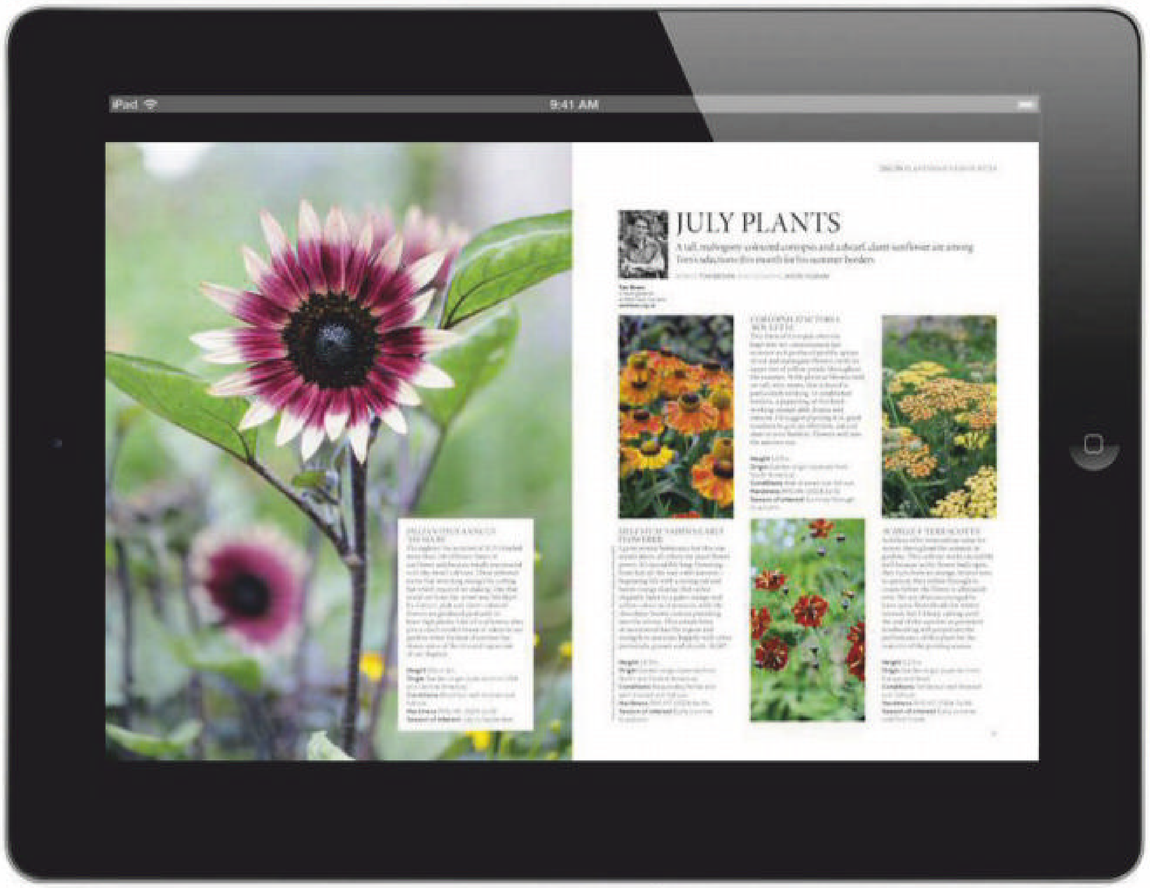

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JULY PLANTS

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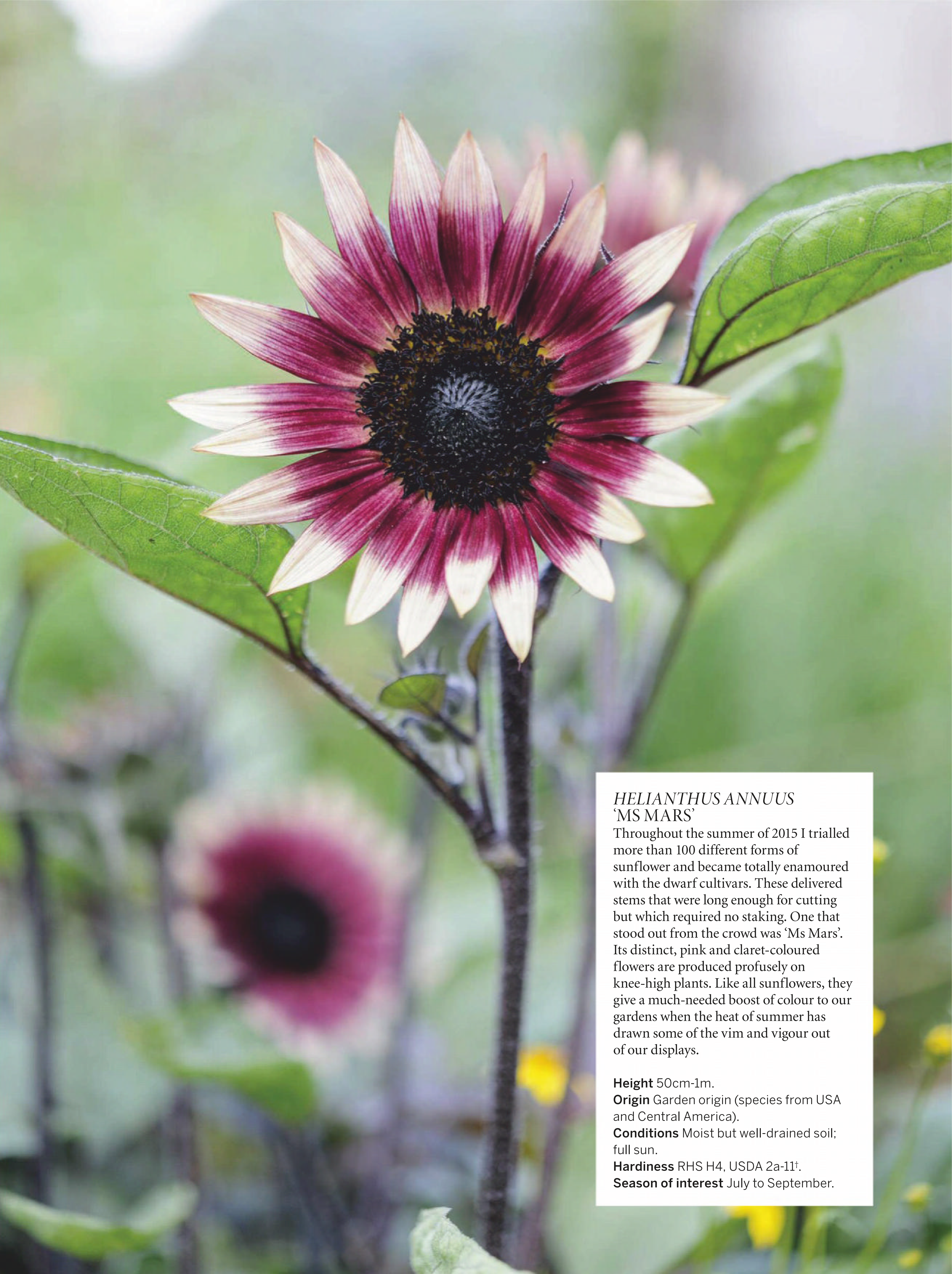


HELIANTHUS ANNUUS 'MS MARS'

Throughout the summer of 2015 I trialled more than 100 different forms of sunflower and became totally enamoured with the dwarf cultivars. These delivered stems that were long enough for cutting but which required no staking. One that stood out from the crowd was 'Ms Mars'. Its distinct, pink and claret-coloured flowers are produced profusely on knee-high plants. Like all sunflowers, they give a much-needed boost of colour to our gardens when the heat of summer has drawn some of the vim and vigour out of our displays.

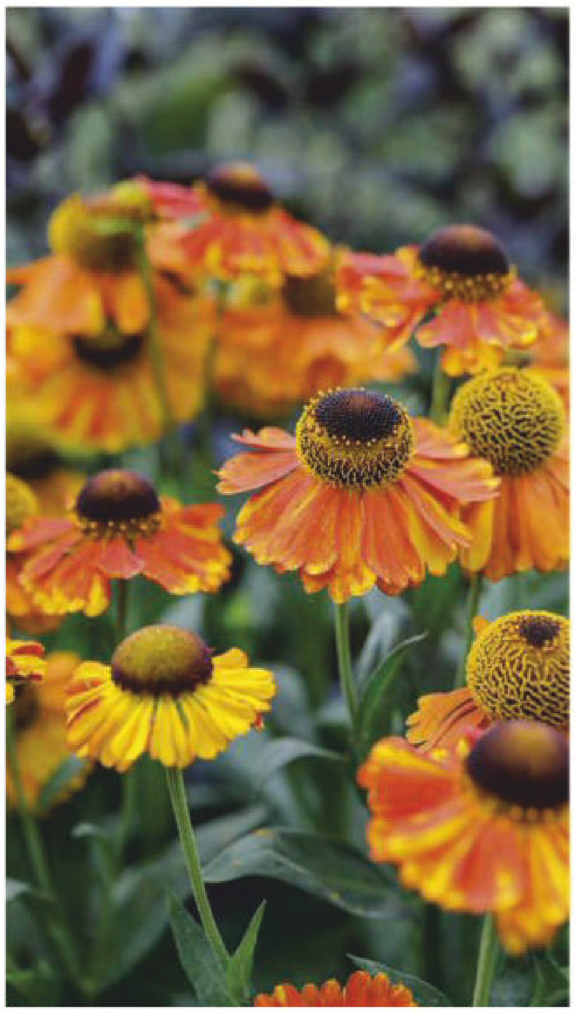
Height 50cm-1m.
Origin Garden origin (species from USA and Central America).
Conditions Moist but well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H4, USDA 2a-11[†].
Season of interest July to September.

Tom Brown
is head gardener
at West Dean Gardens
westdean.org.uk

JULY PLANTS

A tall, mahogany-coloured coreopsis and a dwarf, claret sunflower are among Tom's selections this month for summer borders

WORDS TOM BROWN PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM



HELENIUM 'SAHIN'S EARLY FLOWERER'

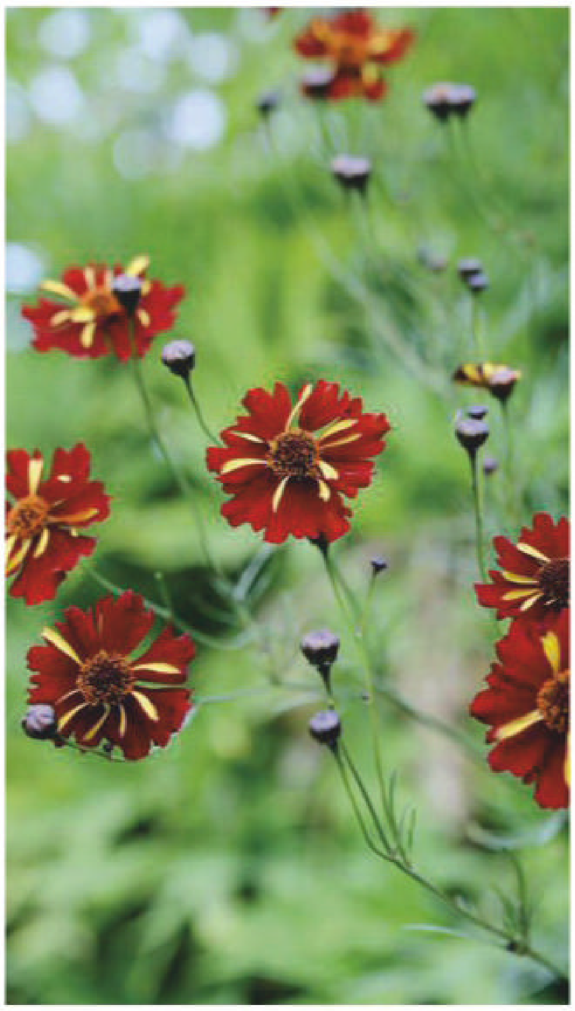
I grow several heleniums but this one stands above all others for sheer flower power. It's incredibly long-flowering – from July all the way until autumn – beginning life with a strong red and burnt-orange display that rather elegantly fades to a paler orange and yellow colour as it senesces, with the chocolatey brown centres persisting into the winter. This robust form of sneezeweed has the vigour and strength to associate happily with other perennials, grasses and shrubs. AGM*.

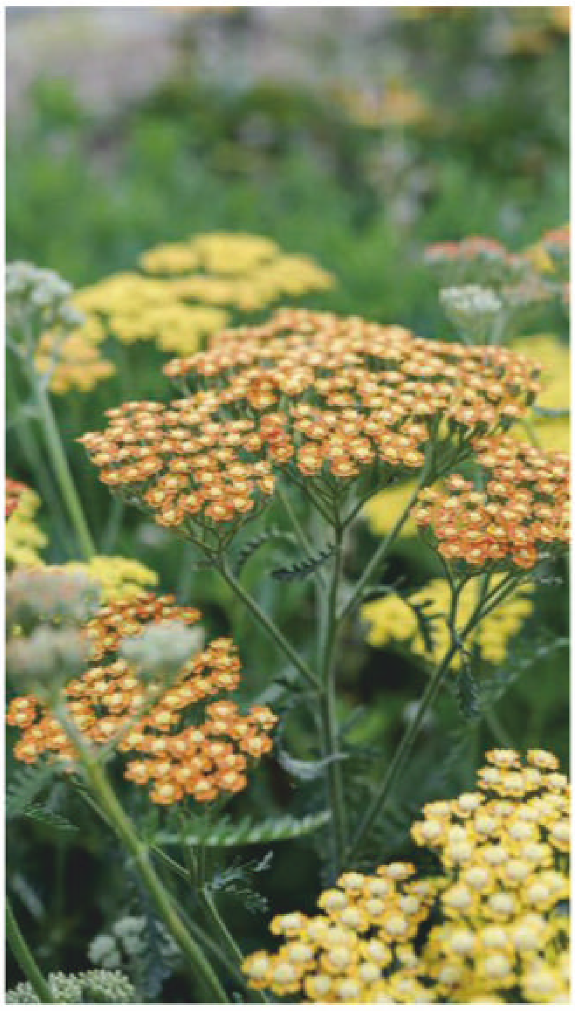
Height 1-1.5m.
Origin Garden origin (species from North and Central America).
Conditions Reasonably fertile and well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest Early summer to autumn.

COREOPSIS TINCTORIA 'ROULETTE'

This form of *Coreopsis tinctoria* leapt into my consciousness last summer as it produced prolific sprays of red and mahogany flowers with an upper tier of yellow petals throughout the summer. With glorious blooms held on tall, wiry stems, this tickseed is particularly striking. In established borders, a peppering of this hard-working annual adds drama and interest. I'd suggest planting it in good numbers to give an effortless, natural slant to your borders. Flowers well into the autumn too.

Height 1-1.5m.
Origin Garden origin (species from North America).
Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 2a-11.
Season of interest Summer through to autumn.





ACHILLEA 'TERRACOTTA'

Achilleas offer tremendous value for money throughout the summer in gardens. This cultivar works incredibly well because as the flower buds open, they turn from an orange, bronze tone to apricot, then yellow through to cream before the flower is ultimately over. We are often encouraged to leave spent flowerheads for winter interest, but I'd keep cutting until the end of the summer as persistent deadheading will perpetuate the performance of this plant for the majority of the growing season.

Height 1-1.5m.
Origin Garden origin (species from Europe and Asia).
Conditions Fertile but well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.
Season of interest Early summer until first frosts.

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

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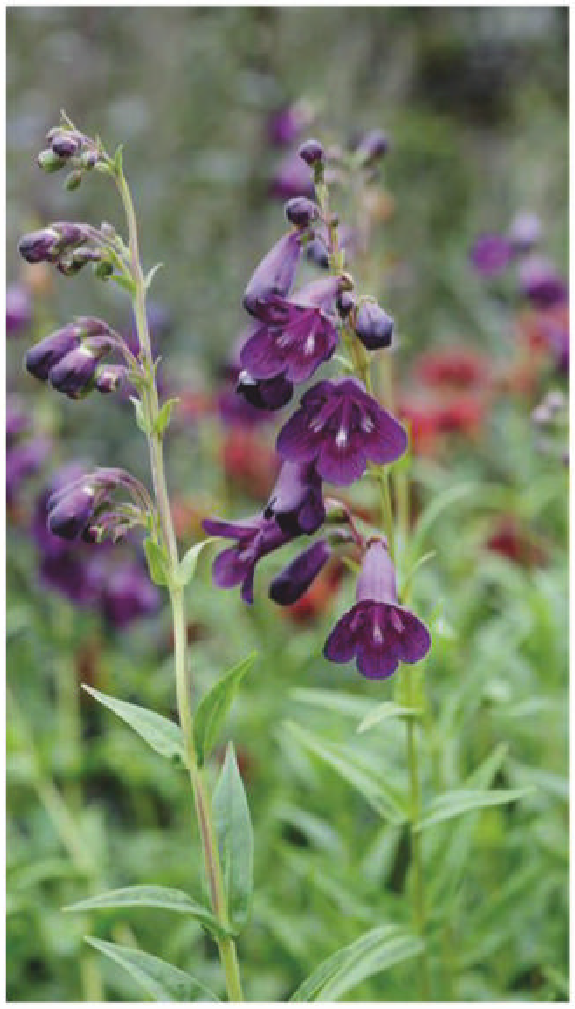


PENSTEMON 'RAVEN'

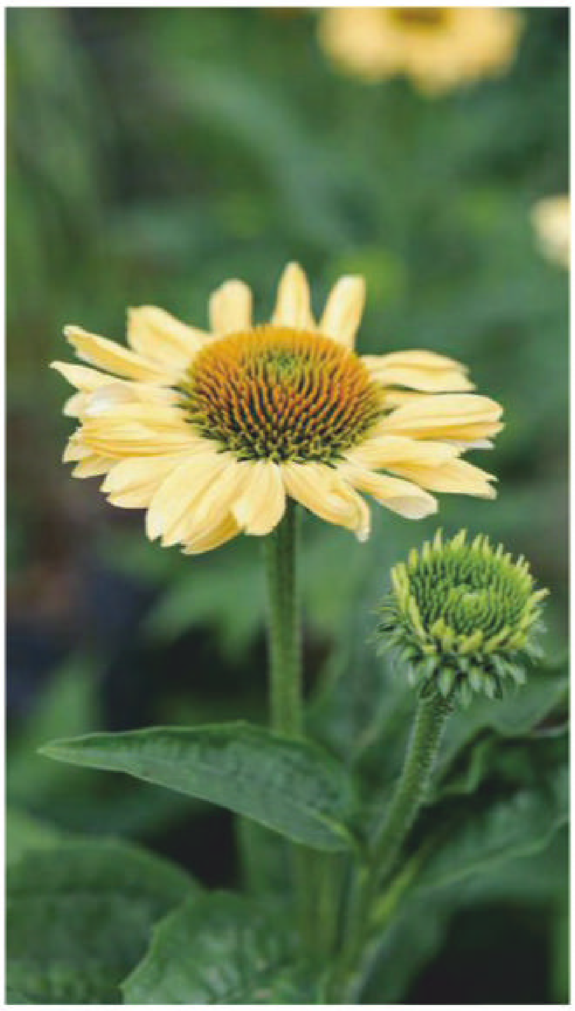
Among the plethora of penstemons currently at our disposal, this classic cultivar is one that has stood the test of time, and rightly so. Tubular, dark-purple flowers appear throughout the summer and into the autumn and the intensity of the flowers contrast well with vibrant reds, such as *Echinacea* 'Tomato Soup' or *Achillea millefolium* 'Red Velvet'. If your garden is in something of a cold spot, strike semi-ripe wood cuttings and overwinter in a frost-free place to ensure successive garden performance for years to come. AGM.

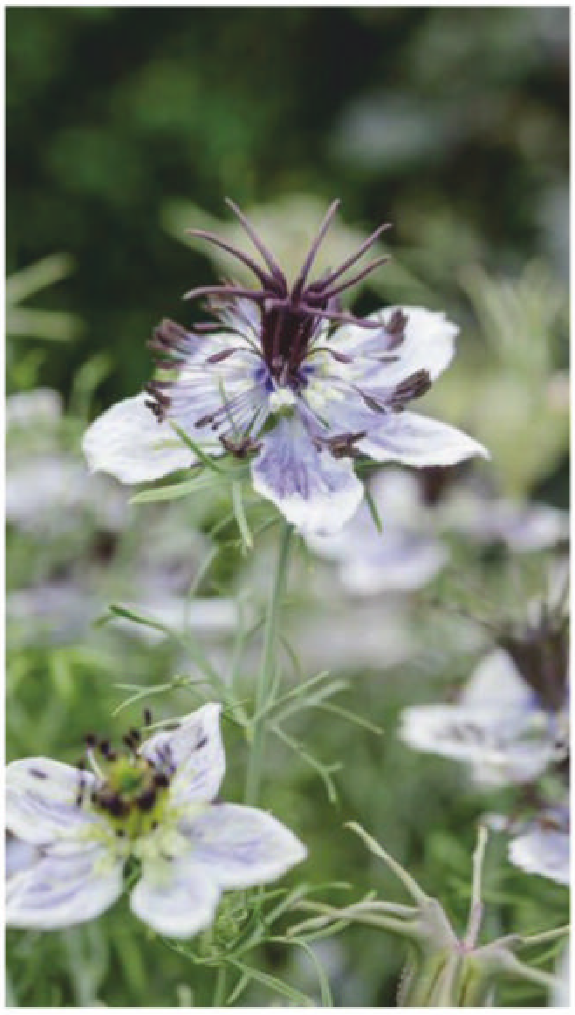
Height 50cm-1m.
Origin Garden origin (species from America and Mexico).
Conditions Fertile, free-draining soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H3, USDA 6a-9b.
Season of interest Summer until first frosts.

ECHINACEA 'ALOHA'

I'll be the first to admit that I was very sceptical when I heard that the RHS was trialling new *Echinacea* as I'd always dismissed the coloured cultivars as novelty and lacking in perenniality. How wrong I was. Five years after the trial began, many have not only survived but thrived at RHS Wisley, putting paid to my concerns about their garden worthiness. This one is particularly tasteful, delivering buttermilk flowers during high summer, which fade to leave a typical conehead as added interest. Try mixing with purple sedums and bronze grasses.

Height 50cm-1m.
Origin Garden origin (species from Eastern and Central North America).
Conditions Best performance in reasonably deep soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H5, USDA 3a-8b.
Season of interest June to August.





NIGELLA PAPILLOSA 'DELFT BLUE'

Once you've tried growing *Nigella papillosa* cultivars you may not want to return to the more familiar *Nigella damascena*. The beauty of the papillosa nigellas lies both in their exaggerated flowers and their subsequent seedheads, which are simply stunning in their own right and look great in borders. The flowers are unusual with bicoloured blooms of white and deep blue on sturdy stems. Nigellas can be equally successful directly sown into a border or started off in modules and then planted out when the plants are large enough.

Height 50cm.
Origin Garden origin (species from Spain and North Africa).
Conditions Reasonable soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H3, USDA 2a-11.
Season of interest June until August from a spring sowing.

PLACES TO VISIT

Recommended places to see seasonal plants at their best

Like many great gardens, **Stone House Cottage Garden & Nursery** was created and is tended by a gardening couple. James and Louisa Arbuthnott have divided the hard and soft landscaping between them, combining and complementing their skills to create a harmonious and incredibly personal garden. Large clumps of summer-flowering perennials, such as *Veronicastrum*, *Phlox* and *Monarda*, fill Louisa's exuberant borders, which are compartmentalised into colours and tones. The one-acre garden and adjoining nursery showcase a number of climbers, in varying garden situations, which are also available to buy. Open Wednesday to Saturday until 31 August. Stone House Cottage Nurseries, Church Lane, nr Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 4BG. Tel 07817 921146, shcn.co.uk

Wollerton Old Hall Gardens are a superb example of what can only be described as a classic English Country Garden. Designed and developed by Lesley and John Jenkins, with an Arts and Crafts flavour throughout. Set amid harsh, flat farmland, the garden is protected by a series of hedges to generate different microclimates where Lesley's roses and perennials can thrive. The planting within the garden structure is wonderfully informal and reflects the wider countryside. This 'relaxed' style becomes even more evident as you venture further from the house and closer to ▷

ALSTROEMERIA 'PANDORA'

Originally bred for the Dutch cut flower trade, this is an excellent addition to a cutting garden or border. I adore the rich purple flowers that can work with most colours, offering a sultry foil to other plants. Alstroemerias are incredibly generous flowerers. To ensure rapid regrowth, pull the stems rather than cut them to stimulate growth. Alstroemerias will flower from early summer until the frosts but need a little protection with a bark mulch for their first winter. It's well worth seeking out this cultivar – I've grown it and been happy with it for years.

Height 1m.
Origin Garden origin (species from South America).
Conditions Organically rich, free-draining soil; sun.
Hardiness RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.
Season of interest Early summer until first frosts.

DAHLIA 'GWYNETH'

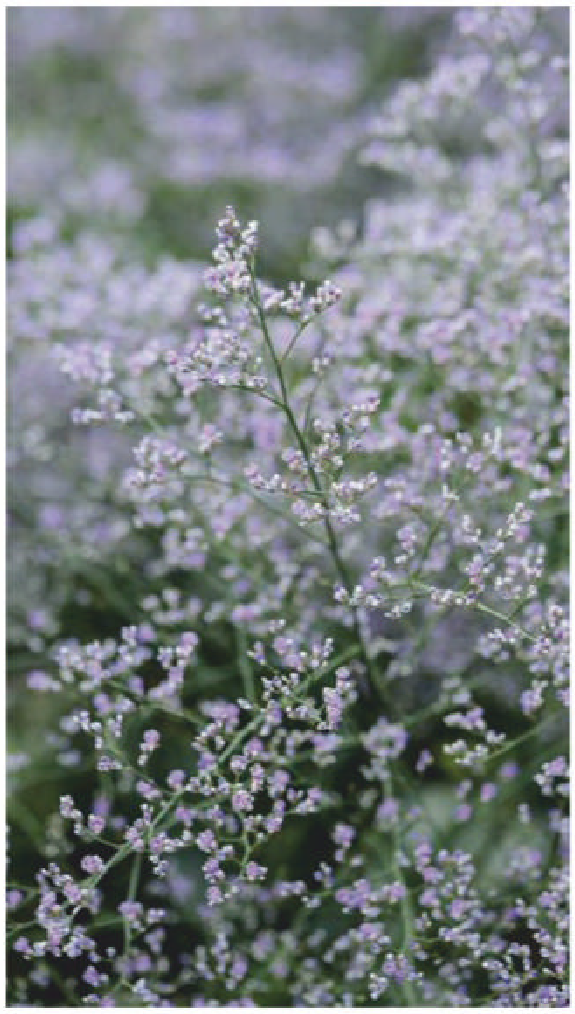
Waterlily types of dahlia make great subjects for cutting and garden display: their long stems provide continuous blooms from summer right through to the first frosts. 'Gwyneth' provides a symphony of burnt orange, bronze and yellow tones in its flower, which I find really appealing. I would recommend cutting stems to a strong pair of buds just as they are freshly opening, a technique known as live-heading, to stay on top of your dahlias. This way you'll improve the flowering performance, ensuring plenty of stems for cutting – and a well-presented garden plant as a result.

Height 1.5m.
Origin Garden origin (species from Mexico and Central America).
Conditions Fertile, well-drained soil; sun.
Hardiness RHS H3, USDA 7a-10b.
Season of interest July until first frosts.

LIMONIUM PLATYPHYLLUM

Surely this plant is due a garden revival? It baffles me why people currently don't grow it more often. *Limonium* is very tolerant of drier conditions and exposed sites, for those of us who struggle with such conditions. I first encountered sea lavender, many years ago, as a cut flower, and saw its potential to associate with a number of other garden plants. I now use it among roses at the front of the border, where its purple, firework-like flowers shroud the roses' bare bases. As its blooms fade, they leave a graceful seedhead, which does not need to be hastily tidied away.

Height 50cm-1m.
Origin Asia, southeast and central Europe.
Conditions Free-draining soil, tolerant of chalk in sun or partial shade.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.
Season of interest July and August.



▷ the landscape beyond. The nursery is also well worth a visit, with a large collection of *Salvia*. Wollerton Old Hall Garden, Wollerton, Market Drayton TF9 3NA. Tel 01630 685760, wollertonoldhallgarden.com

July is a great month to explore **Waterperry Gardens** near Oxford. Made famous by Beatrix Havergal, who established her School of Horticulture for Ladies here from 1932 to 1971, the gardens are now tended by head gardener Pat Havers and her wonderful team. Several areas stand out, including a Formal Garden and a Waterlily Canal, but one of the triumphs is the Long Colour Border, which is superb for a good proportion of the year but exceptional in July. Look out for the innovative ways in which roses are trained and used for dramatic effect. To complete a visit, Waterperry Nursery is always full of plants to tempt you. Waterperry Gardens, Waterperry, Oxford OX33 1LA. Tel 01844 339254, waterperrygardens.co.uk

The herbaceous borders within the Walled Garden at **Rousham** are well worth a visit in high summer, as are the wider grounds of Rousham House, where many of the 18th-century features, including cascades, ponds, and a seven-arched terrace, named the Praeneste after the Roman town of Palestrina, remain in situ. Rousham's planting can be described as opulent and full, with a fine collection of dahlias. In spite of its magnificent features, architecture and floral displays, the garden can be enjoyed in relative peace and tranquillity as it is not overcrowded – a hidden gem. It's all very low key with no tea room, so do take a picnic or snack. Rousham House, Rousham, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX25 4QU. Tel 01869 347665, rousham.org

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The Outsider

Horticulturist Hannah Gardner journeys to the Scilly Isles off the southwest tip of Cornwall, where a mild climate, sandy soils and Daucus carota*, the ornamental wild carrot, await*

WORDS **HANNAH GARDNER** ILLUSTRATION **ALICE PATTULLO**

Just 45km off Britain's southwest peninsula lies a granite archipelago of around a hundred islands and islets, only five of which are inhabited. But despite frequent battering by the Atlantic, the Isles of Scilly are a haven for unusual plant and animal species.

The islands are home to the impressive Tresco Abbey Gardens and a thriving cut-flower industry. Crop fields with dense, evergreen hedges of *Pittosporum*, *Olearia* and *Escallonia* provide shelter from the wind, and from November to March many islanders are involved in growing scented *Narcissus tazetta* for flower markets on the mainland.

Thanks to the Gulf Stream, the islands have a damp but relatively balmy and usually frost-free climate year round. The eclectic plant collections first introduced into the gardens on Tresco have flourished throughout the islands; exotic *Agapanthus*, aeoniums and towering tree echiums are considered weeds here.

Inspiration for the trip

The naturalised, non-native plants of the Scilly Isles first captured my imagination. These glamorous, roaming thugs have defied enclosure and gradually infiltrated the native flora to such an extent that the colonies have become an attraction in themselves. In addition to the subtropical paradise of Tresco Abbey Gardens, you can wander through the island's southern sand dunes and see swathes of *Agapanthus praecox*, their tall, ultramarine flowerheads held on stiff stems amid the silky inflorescence of tough marram grass and pools of low, purple heather.

When to go

The Scillies are compact, popular and lightly developed for tourism, so planning well ahead is essential. April to October is the best time to enjoy flowering plants. The winter months are liberating and dramatic, but transport links less reliable.

Where to go

Despite their close proximity and low altitude, each island has a distinct character. Away from the colourful, arable weeds associated with the inland fields and hedgerows there is a mixture of wild, lowland heath and rich, coastal flora. Thin, acidic soils support the heathland, and the sandy dunes and exposed cliffs are a riot of native and non-native species. Permissive paths criss-cross the islands and wind around the deeply indented coastline. Weathered, granite cairns naturally demarcate the headlands and secluded coves.

You need to crouch down to locate the more unusual (and tiny) special native flowers. Flashes of burnt orange can be inconspicuous among the thick heath, but look out for orange birdsfoot (*Ornithopus pinnatus*), a species unknown on the UK mainland. This – along with the dwarf pansy (*Viola kitaibeliana*) and the rare least adder's tongue fern (*Ophioglossum lusitanicum*), a plant with an astonishing 1,260 chromosomes – is at its northernmost geographical limit in the Scillies. These floral relics speak of the islands' historic land connection to mainland Europe.

Pink thrift (*Armeria maritima*) thrives on the exposed rocks and short turf of the coastal strip. It forms impressive drifts, a beautiful juxtaposition with the colourful splattering of minute lichen found on the smooth boulders. The lack of pollution enables rare seaweeds and lichens to flourish. Scruffy, yellow, horned poppies (*Glaucium flavum*) and the erect, fleshy leaved sea spurge (*Euphorbia paralias*) grow in fine sand above the waterline. Other common beach species are hard on bare feet: the spikes of prickly saltwort (*Salsola kali*) are easily spotted, but the metallic-grey sea holly (*Eryngium maritimum*) sprawls half-hidden in the grassy dunes. Many exotic, non-native plants have heavily colonised the dunes. You cannot fail to notice the stiff spikes of *Furcraea longaeva*, a beefy, architectural, Mexican, monocarpic species that can reach a colossal 9m tall when in flower, a feat it achieves only once in its lifecycle. The neon flowers of the succulent Hottentot fig (*Carpobrotus edulis*) are fun but a little trashy compared with the reflective, elegant pink trumpets of another South African species, the capricious Belladonna lily (*Amaryllis belladonna*) that appears throughout the islands in autumn.

Plant to grow at home

The frothy, tumbling, coastal swathes of wild carrot on Bryher inspired me to try these bucolic beauties at home. The seeds require a period of cold to break their dormancy so an autumn sowing results in good germination and flowering the following June-September. I have come to rely on them as a useful and unusual 'filler', threading young plants in self-supporting groups through perennial border plants and in large container displays. Demanding of a sunny situation and beloved by insects, they reach 80cm, creating an airy, slightly wild atmosphere. The common name Queen Anne's lace alludes to the strange, single, dark flower floret, perhaps where Anne pricked her finger while lace making. To be clear on names, *Daucus carota* subsp. *carota* is the wild form of carrot. The subspecies commonly found in the Scillies is *D. carota* subsp. *gummifer*, the more stocky sea carrot. Domestic carrots are swollen, rooted cultivars of the subspecies *D. carota* subsp. *sativus*. Fine, filigree leaves and branching stems support softly domed flowerheads that mature from antique-pink buds to a creamy-white flower. After flowering, the umbels fold inwards to form decorative seedheads that persist well into winter. *Daucus carota* 'Dara', a dark form, is beautiful planted in a sultry scheme brightened by flashes of lime green.

Guides and maps

Wildflowers of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by David Chapman (Alison Hodge, 2008).

The Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, which manages 24 sites of special scientific interest on the islands, has a very informative website: **wildlifetrust.org.uk**

Where to stay

Hell Bay Hotel
Bryher, Isles of Scilly TR23 0PR.
Tel 01720 422947, hellbay.co.uk
Sea Garden Cottages
Tresco, Isles of Scilly TR24 0PW.
Tel 01720 422849, tresco.co.uk
Star Castle Hotel
Hugh Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly TR21 0JA.
Tel 01720 422317, star-castle.co.uk

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GARDENING TALENT

Chris Flynn

As head gardener at heritage garden Dyffryn in the Vale of Glamorgan, Chris works with plants collected from all over the world in a garden covering 55 acres

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest garden memory Moving to a new house and accidently running head first into a *Rosa rugosa* in the middle of the lawn. It certainly kicked off a life-long love/hate relationship with roses.

Who has inspired your career? It has to be my mum. She's always grown a huge range of plants and is totally fearless when it comes to growing something new. She's also totally fearless when it comes to cutting things down or pruning hard. Definitely an ethos I carry through to my current role.

Horticultural heroes 'Capability' Brown for salesmanship; to be able to sell someone a legacy rather than something tangible is an incredible thing. Planning for the long-term future is something that is very close to my heart, but nowadays rather than it being for wealthy land owners, it's for the hundreds of thousands of people who I hope will continue to visit the gardens here at Dyffryn.

Biggest challenge facing gardeners today Training is probably the biggest challenge. There are lots of really good opportunities for people a little further on in their career, but the entry-level bits can be challenging, particularly for those looking to link up practical training with their qualifications.

Tell us about a tricky gardening related task Physically, digging out two substantial *Arbutus* stumps by hand, powered only by youthful exuberance and jelly babies. Mentally, is probably the breadth of planning, writing papers, reviewing plans and keeping things fresh in the mind and in an orderly fashion for a massive garden restoration project. The jelly babies help with this one too.

Guiding principles A quality finish and constant improvement. In horticulture you're always putting on a show, particularly in public gardens and there's always a way to make things better.

Favourite gardening books I reference Piet Oudolf's *Designing With Plants* a lot for the way it makes you think about plant compositions beyond just colour schemes. This idea can be scaled up or down to suit any sized garden and any type of planting arrangement, not just for herbaceous borders.

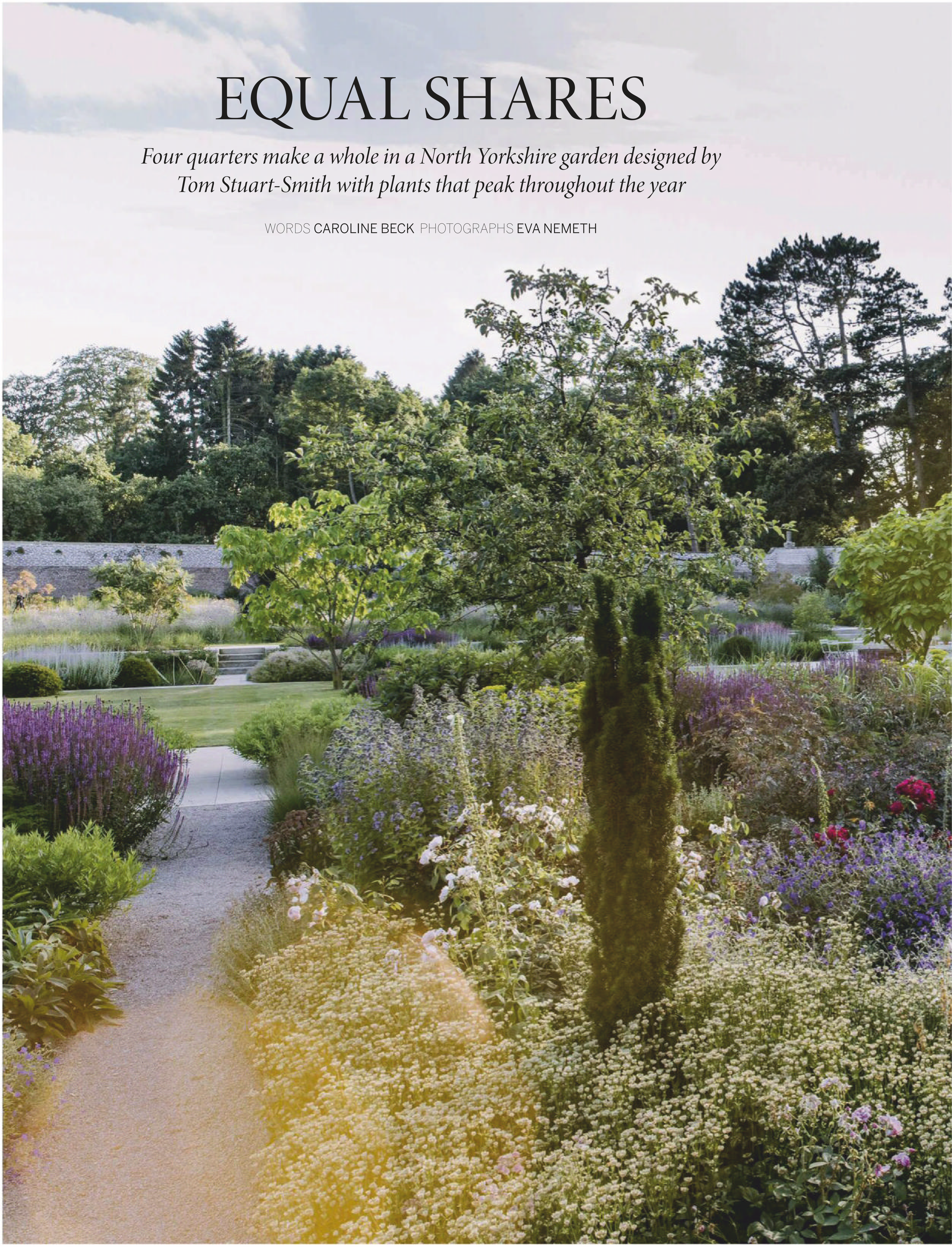
What's your next big project? This year we'll be renovating the South Front at Dyffryn to restore the intention of the Thomas Mawson Edwardian designs, along with fantastic views across the gardens valley setting.

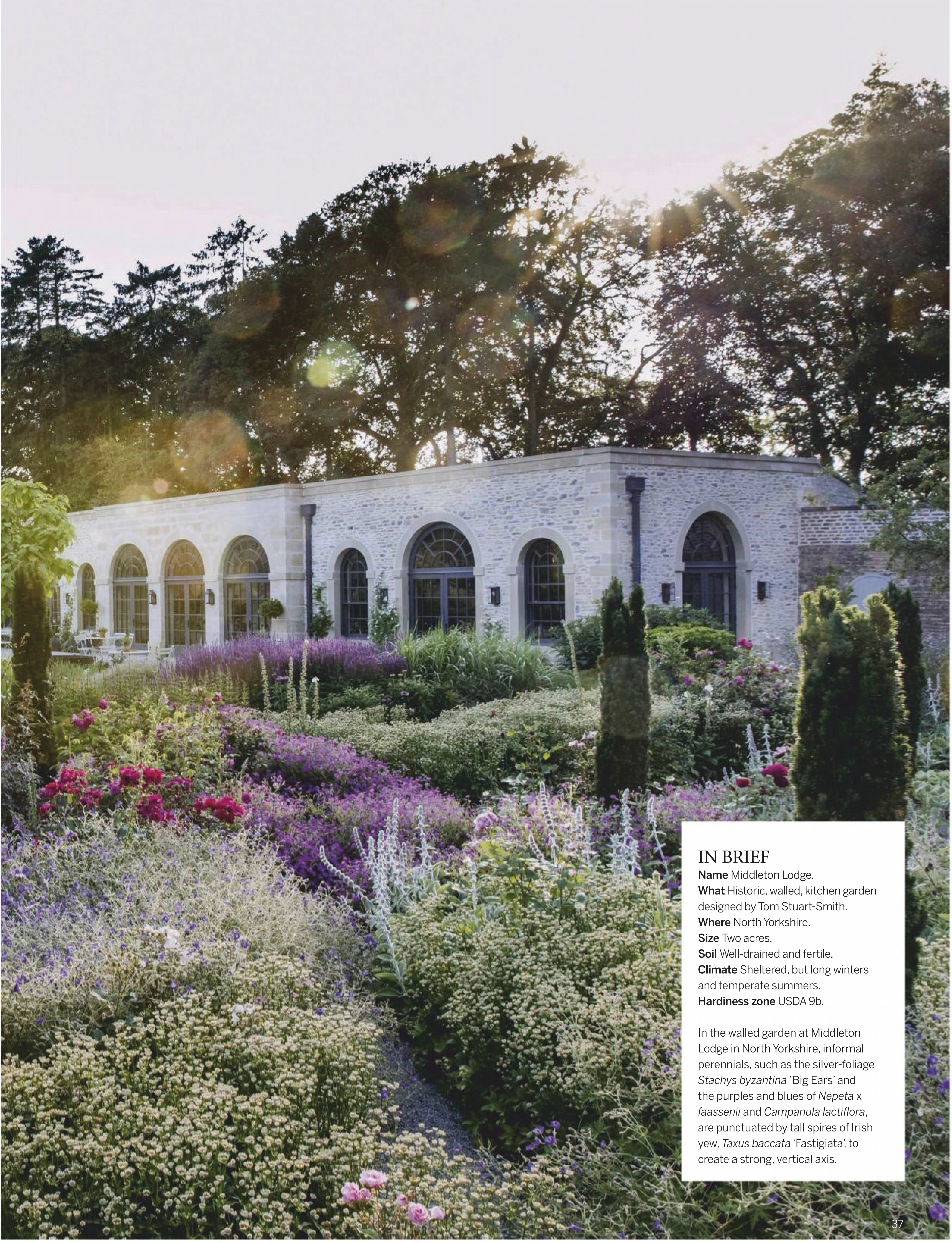
Contact chris.flynn@nationaltrust.org.uk

EQUAL SHARES

Four quarters make a whole in a North Yorkshire garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith with plants that peak throughout the year

WORDS **CAROLINE BECK** PHOTOGRAPHS **EVA NEMETH**





IN BRIEF

Name Middleton Lodge.
What Historic, walled, kitchen garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith.
Where North Yorkshire.
Size Two acres.
Soil Well-drained and fertile.
Climate Sheltered, but long winters and temperate summers.
Hardiness zone USDA 9b.

In the walled garden at Middleton Lodge in North Yorkshire, informal perennials, such as the silver-foliage *Stachys byzantina* 'Big Ears' and the purples and blues of *Nepeta* x *faassenii* and *Campanula lactiflora*, are punctuated by tall spires of Irish yew, *Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata', to create a strong, vertical axis.

I have visited Middleton Lodge for a few years, watching its transformation from a private house to a rural retreat and always wondered what was happening to the Grade ll*-listed walled garden. It was impossible not to imagine how magnificent it had once had been. The current owner of Middleton Lodge, James Allison, remembers when it was a working garden. "It was wonderful, but bit by bit it fell into disrepair. It was grazed by sheep, and became a Christmas tree nursery. As we gradually restored the rest of the estate, the challenge was how to make the walled garden commercially viable."

Abandoned walled gardens are not that uncommon, even though many of them have been restored with spectacular success. They had their heyday in the 18th and 19th centuries, when labour was inexpensive, but after the Second World War, when gardeners found better-paid work in the towns and cities, many walled gardens fell into decline. With little money for upkeep, most walled gardens went the way of Middleton, which is why, over the past few years, watching it go from wasteland to one of the most beautiful gardens in the north of England has been something of a miracle.

If James Allison and his architect wife Rebecca Tappin have presided over the restoration of this 18th-century estate with elegant house, it is the multi-award-winning garden designer Tom Stuart-Smith who has realised their plans for the walled garden. Tom is internationally famous for his large-scale public gardens such as RHS Wisley and the historic Italianate landscape at Trentham. Equally renowned are his designs for private gardens, with their prairie-style grasses and late-summer-flowering perennials. His brief for the Kitchen Garden at Middleton was to make an intimate space with something for every season, to function primarily as the backdrop to the Fig House.

While the design incorporates many of Tom's trademark elements, the result is more formal than many of his gardens, which have a certain wild and shaggy feel. Creating intimacy in a two-acre garden that holds its own in every season is not easy. Tom began by dividing the garden, which is all on one level, into four distinct areas designed to reach their peak at different times of the year. Each area has its own unmistakable character, designated by spring, summer, a prairie garden and a fruit and vegetable garden, the latter reflecting how the garden would once have been used. As one part of the garden quietens, another springs up, and there is always an area that is flowering, fruiting or sculptural.

Visitors gasp as they pass through a modest wooden door to enter the garden, rolled out before them in all its glory. Four domed, iron arbours, one in each area, built by the estate's construction team and trained with pears, white roses and wisteria, give the garden height and structure. You can peek through the slats from within, seeing others moving through the garden without being seen. Further height and texture comes from shrubs, such as the flamboyant Persian ironwood (*Parrotia persica*), which also provides colour and year-round interest with purple leaves in autumn, abundant crimson flowers on bare twigs in late winter and early spring, as well as attractive flaking bark. Tall perennials such as pink-flowered *Lythrum salicaria* 'Swirl', reddish-violet *Salvia nemorosa* 'Amethyst' and intense *Perovskia* 'Blue Spire' lend the garden a sense of romance and mingle effortlessly with *Campanula lactiflora* and swathes of low-growing *Geranium* 'Nimbus'.

Pathways that once would have been straight for ease of access now weave and thread their way through the garden, encouraging visitors to meander and stop to look around them. Evergreens such as *Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata' (Irish yew) and box clipped into uprights or domes punctuate the wilder planting, and give height when everything else in the garden is low after winter. Retaining the fruit and vegetables has been a master stroke, with specimens such as the crab apple *Malus* 'Evereste' both practical and beautiful in nature.

Has it turned out as James expected? "Even better," he says. He has already commissioned Tom for an even more ambitious project, that of a Quarry Garden, a restoration project at nearby Barton Quarry. The limestone quarry is still being worked and isn't expected to be ready for development for another four to five years, but Tom is excited by the prospect of creating an amphitheatre and wildflower meadow there. But that is for the future. For now, there is much to appreciate closer at hand, as Middleton's Kitchen Garden revels in all its summer glory. □

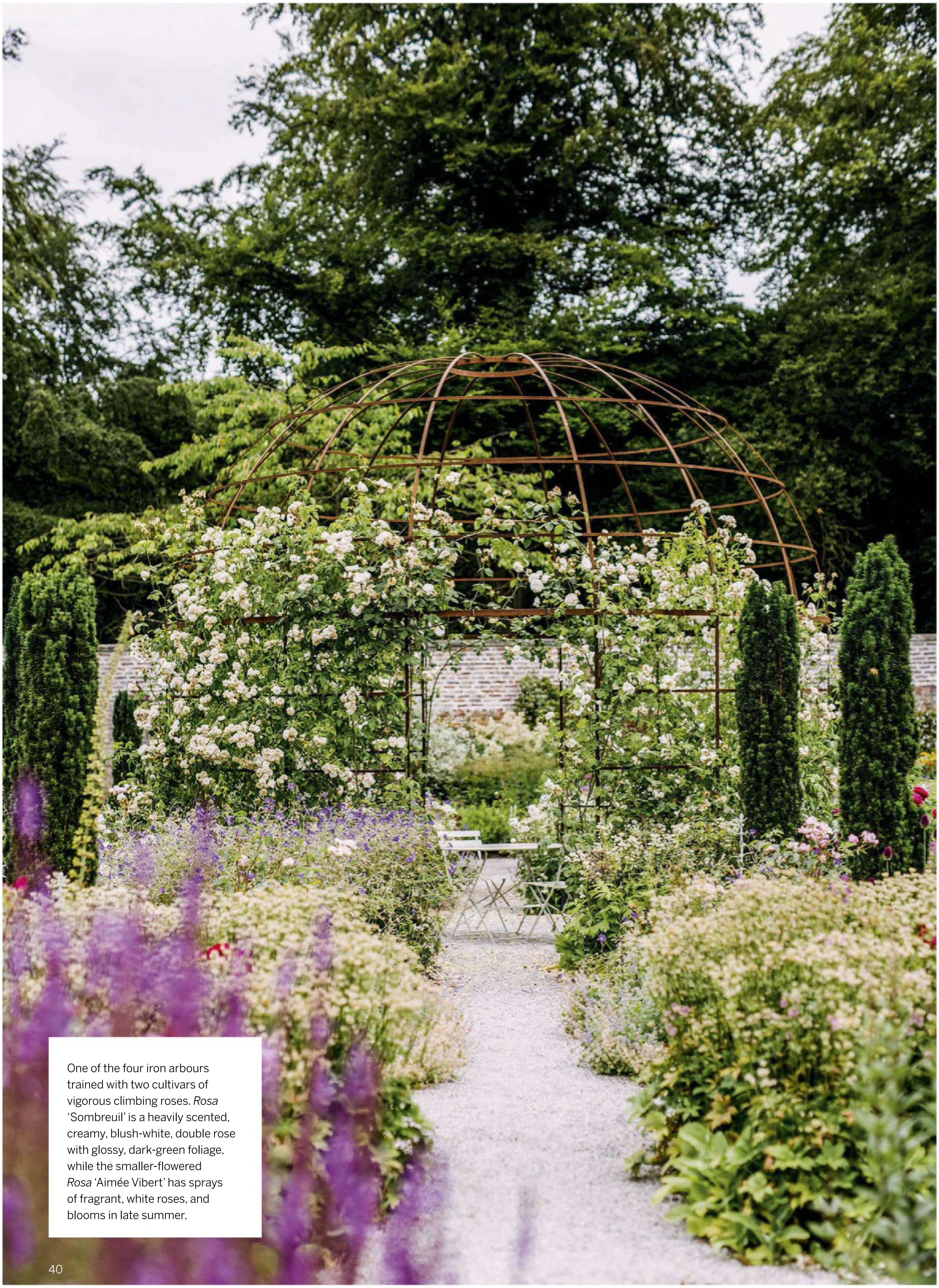
USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Middleton Lodge, Kneeton Lane, Middleton Tyas, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 6NJ. **Tel** 01325 377977. **Web** middletonlodge.co.uk **Open** The Kitchen Garden hosts open days throughout the year with tours led by the gardening team. See website for details.

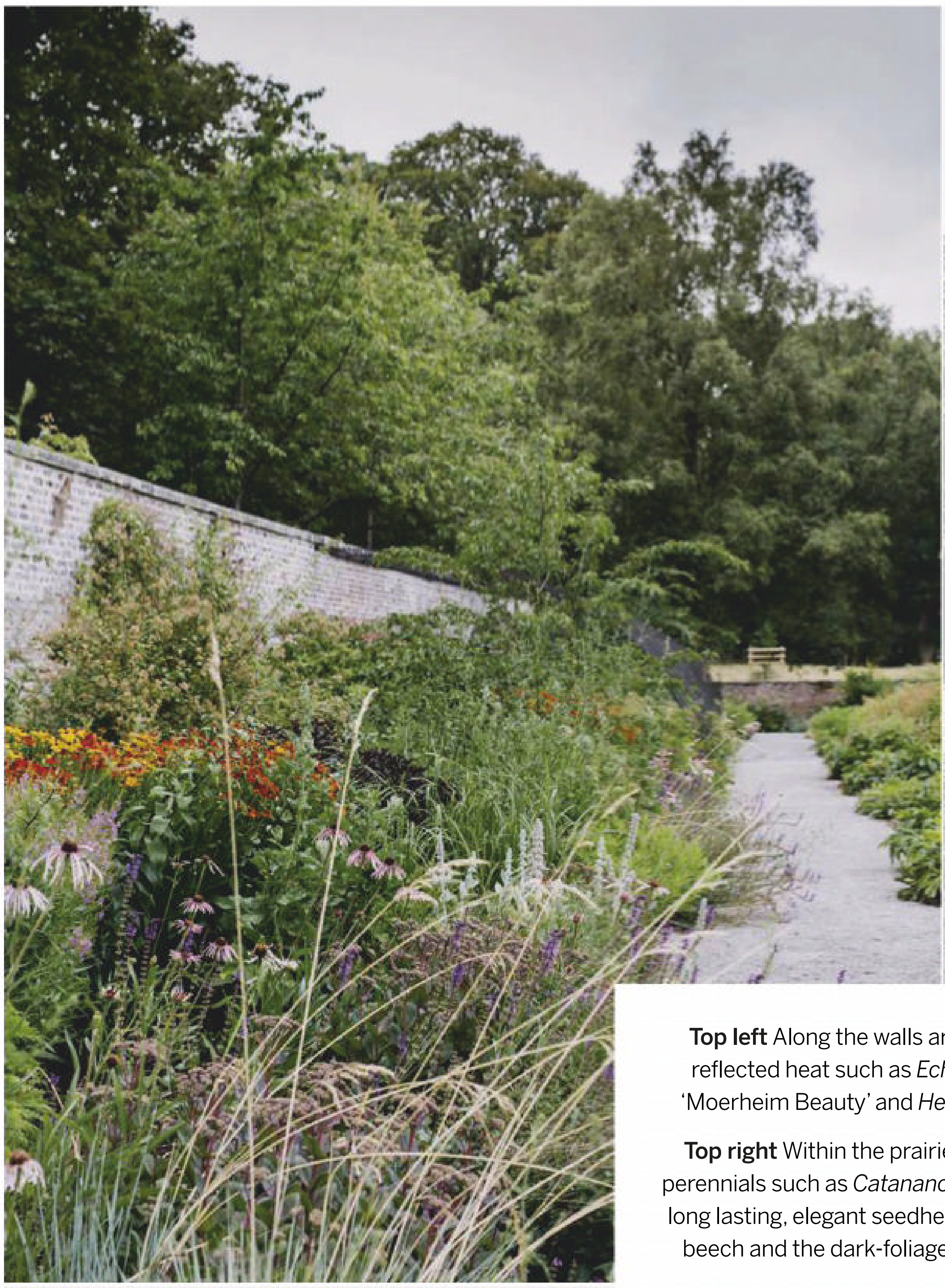
Facing page

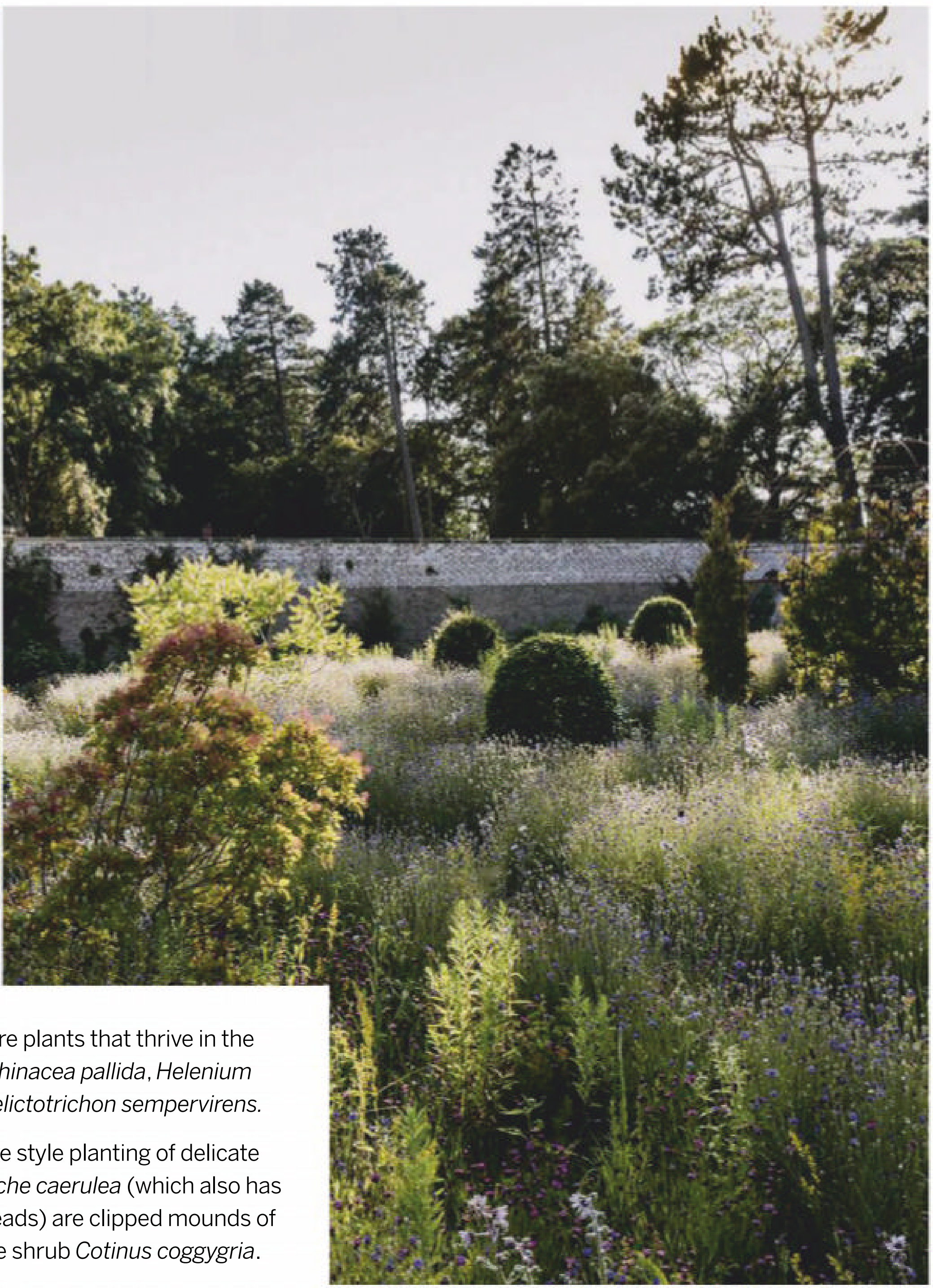
The pale, brick walls provide warmth and shelter, creating ideal growing conditions for many plants to flourish. Perennials have been selected for their long season of interest, for either foliage (the dark leaves of *Eupatorium rugosum* 'Chocolate') or flowers (the dramatic green, pink and ivory-coloured bracts of *Astrantia major* subsp. *involucrata* 'Shaggy'). Many, such as *Geranium* Patricia (= 'Brempat'), will flower again once they are cut right back after the first flush has faded.

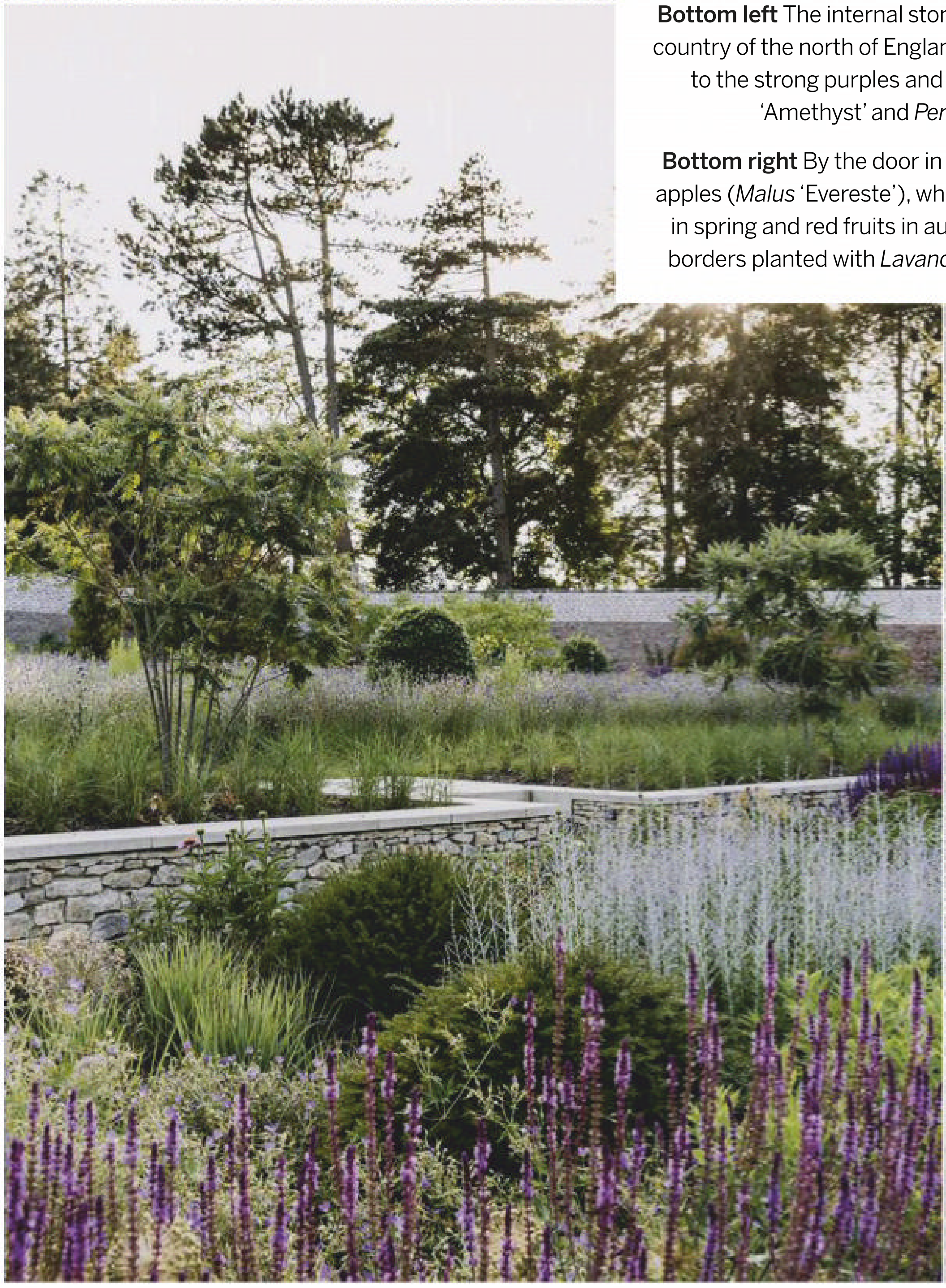
The garden is divided into four distinct areas designed to reach their peak at different times of the year

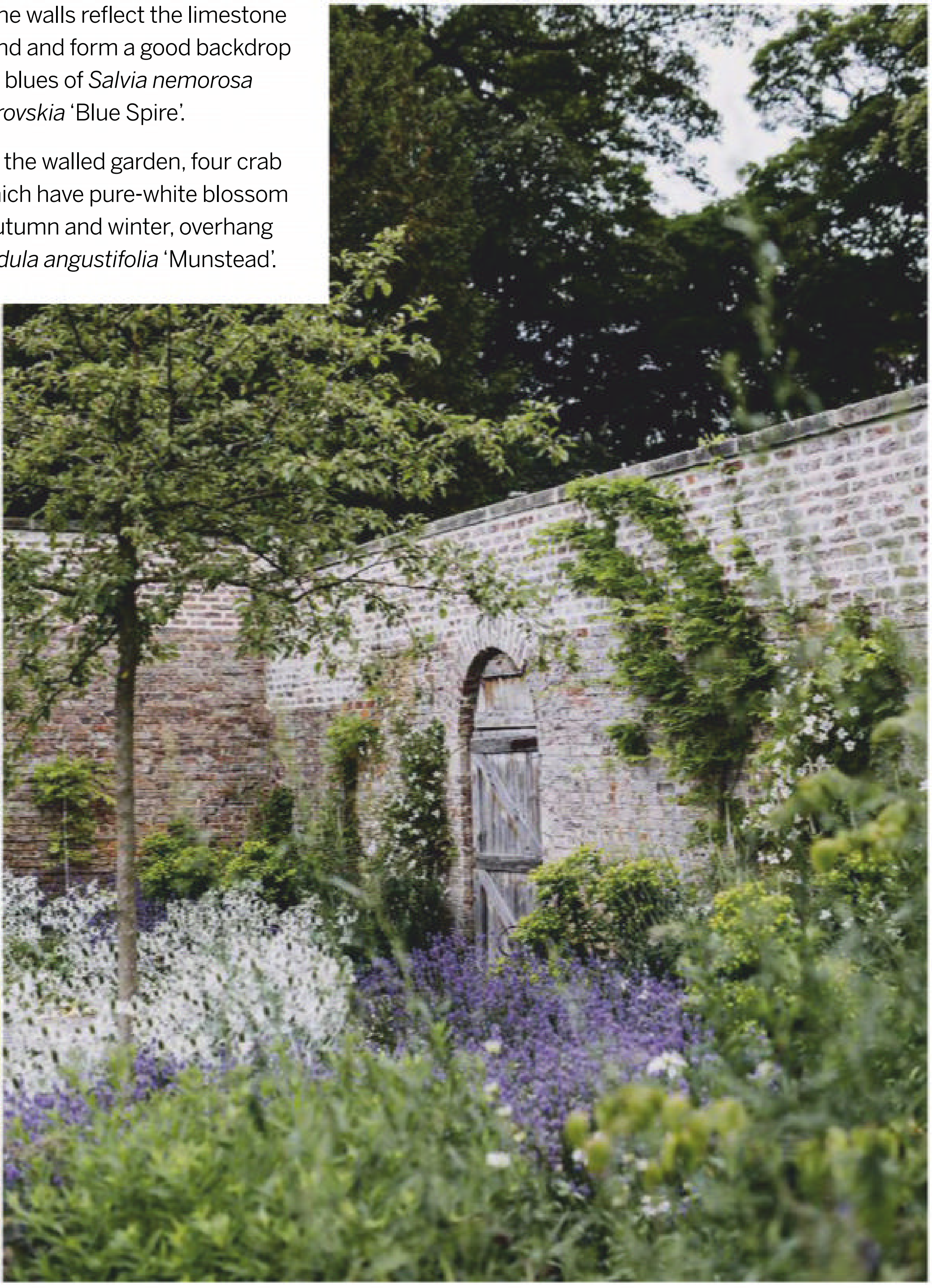


One of the four iron arbours trained with two cultivars of vigorous climbing roses. *Rosa* 'Sombreuil' is a heavily scented, creamy, blush-white, double rose with glossy, dark-green foliage, while the smaller-flowered *Rosa* 'Aimée Vibert' has sprays of fragrant, white roses, and blooms in late summer.









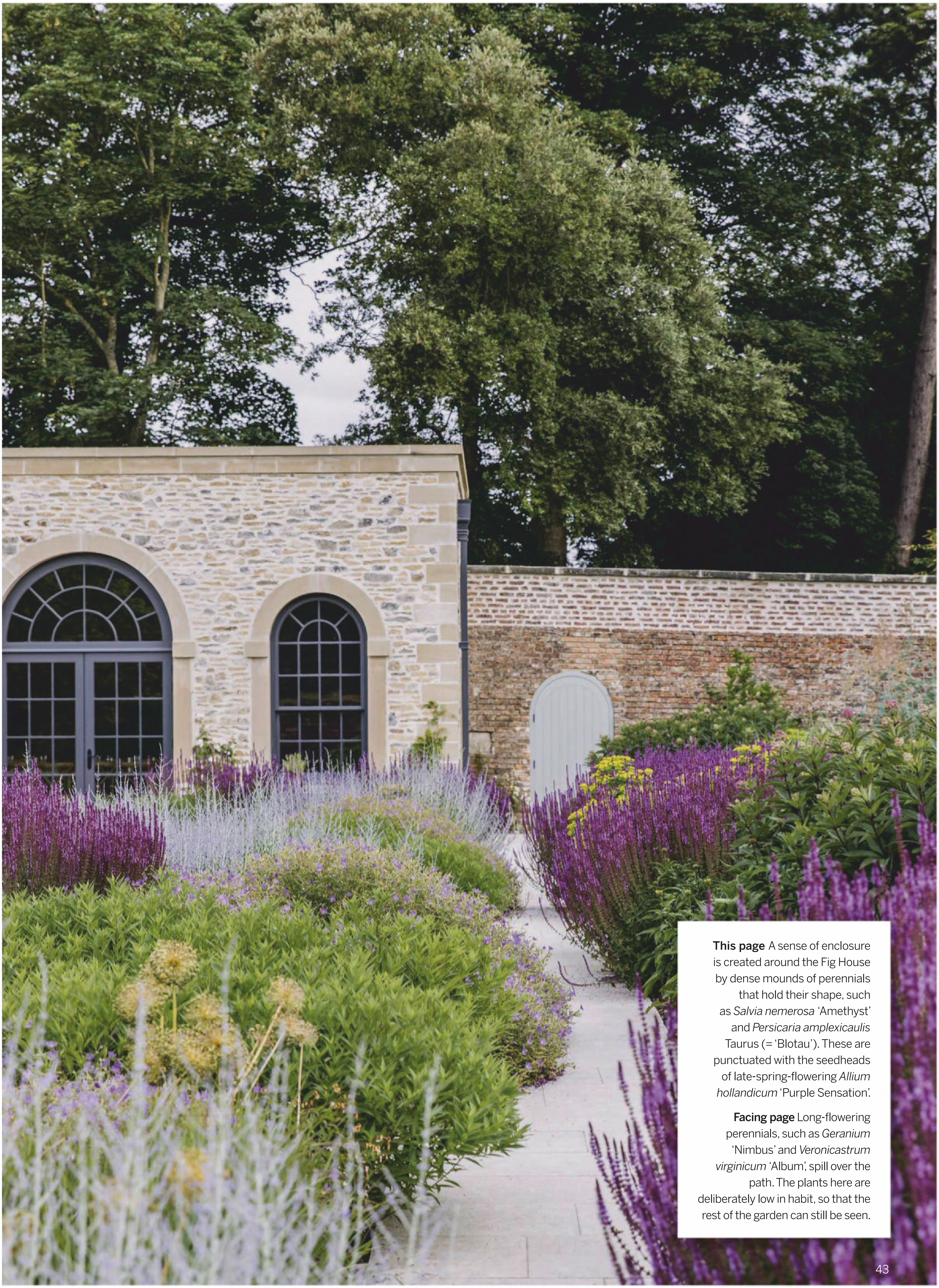
Top left Along the walls are plants that thrive in the reflected heat such as *Echinacea pallida*, *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty' and *Helictotrichon sempervirens.*

Top right Within the prairie style planting of delicate perennials such as *Catananche caerulea* (which also has long lasting, elegant seedheads) are clipped mounds of beech and the dark-foliage shrub *Cotinus coggygria*.

Bottom left The internal stone walls reflect the limestone country of the north of England and form a good backdrop to the strong purples and blues of *Salvia nemorosa* 'Amethyst' and *Perovskia* 'Blue Spire'.

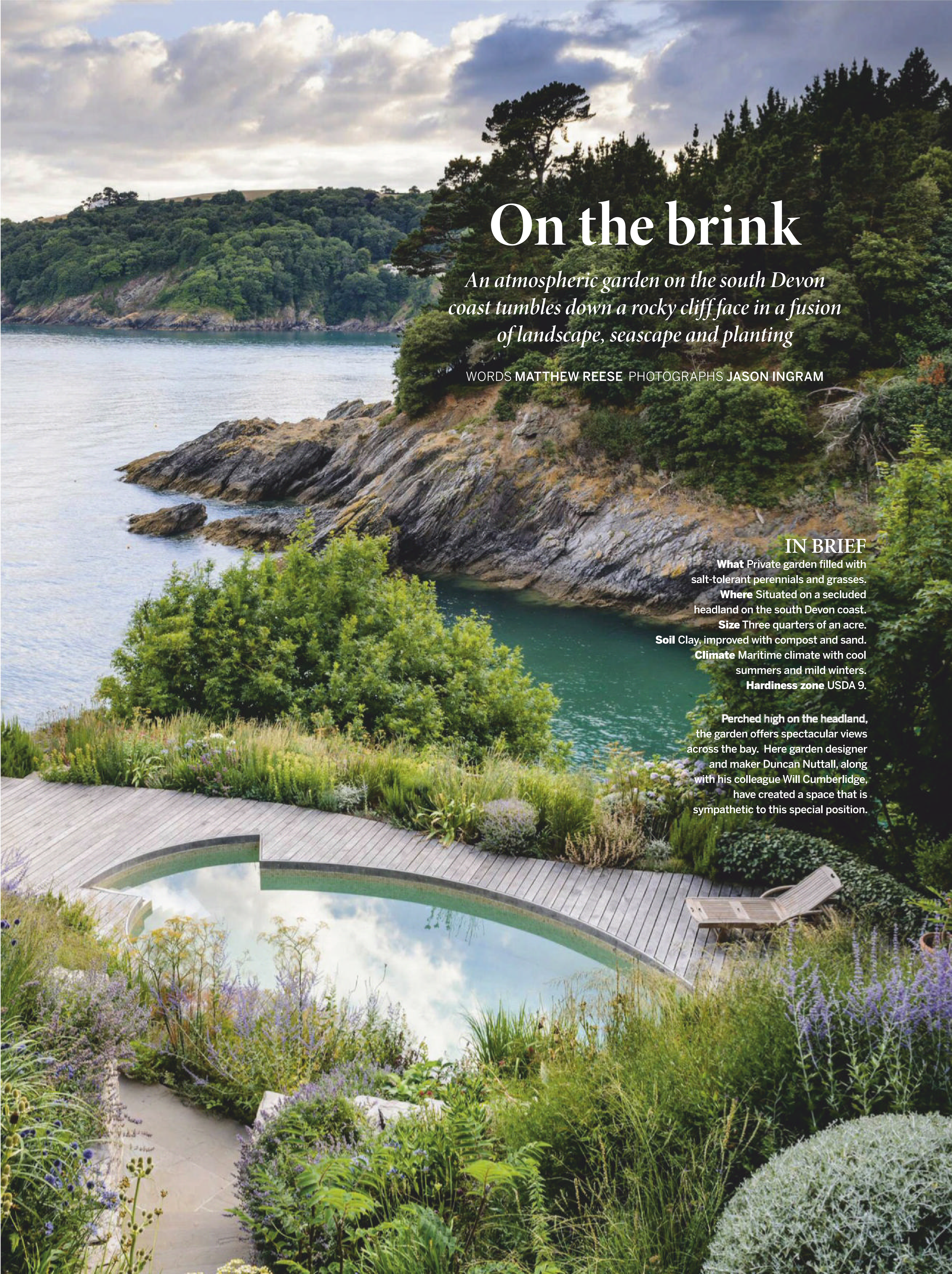
Bottom right By the door in the walled garden, four crab apples (*Malus* 'Evereste'), which have pure-white blossom in spring and red fruits in autumn and winter, overhang borders planted with *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Munstead'.

There is always an area of the garden that is flowering, fruiting or sculptural



This page A sense of enclosure is created around the Fig House by dense mounds of perennials that hold their shape, such as *Salvia nemerosa* 'Amethyst' and *Persicaria amplexicaulis* Taurus (= 'Blotau'). These are punctuated with the seedheads of late-spring-flowering *Allium hollandicum* 'Purple Sensation'.

Facing page Long-flowering perennials, such as *Geranium* 'Nimbus' and *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Album', spill over the path. The plants here are deliberately low in habit, so that the rest of the garden can still be seen.



On the brink

An atmospheric garden on the south Devon coast tumbles down a rocky cliff face in a fusion of landscape, seascape and planting

WORDS **MATTHEW REESE** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

IN BRIEF

What Private garden filled with salt-tolerant perennials and grasses.
Where Situated on a secluded headland on the south Devon coast.
Size Three quarters of an acre.
Soil Clay, improved with compost and sand.
Climate Maritime climate with cool summers and mild winters.
Hardiness zone USDA 9.

Perched high on the headland, the garden offers spectacular views across the bay. Here garden designer and maker Duncan Nuttall, along with his colleague Will Cumberlidge, have created a space that is sympathetic to this special position.

Above left Blue dots of *Echinops ritro* 'Veitch's Blue' and tight umbels of *Eryngium agavifolium* lead the eye and through the softer billowing grasses towards the house.

Above right An old pump house has been carefully adapted into a hide-away reading room. The green oak and glass construction sits comfortably in the garden landscape with *Foeniculum vulgare* 'Purpureum' and *Perovskia* 'Blue Spire' mingling with *Agapanthus* Headbourne hybrids in the foreground.

Gardening within striking distance of the sea can be fraught with difficulties. Christopher Lloyd, the gardener and writer of Great Dixter fame, once suggested that one often has to choose between having a view of the sea or having a garden, and most gardeners would agree that it is rare to have both with any success.

Yet on a secluded, craggy headland within a stone's throw from the sea, is a garden billowing with delicate herbaceous flowers and soft grasses and an amazing view.

The garden is only three years old and was designed by Duncan Nuttall who built and planted the entire garden with his colleague Will Cumberlidge. They were initially commissioned by the owners to reconfigure an old pump room in the garden to create a small, look-out reading room built with green oak and glass. The project soon evolved into the redevelopment of the area around the house, and a space leading down a precipitous slope all the way to the tideline.

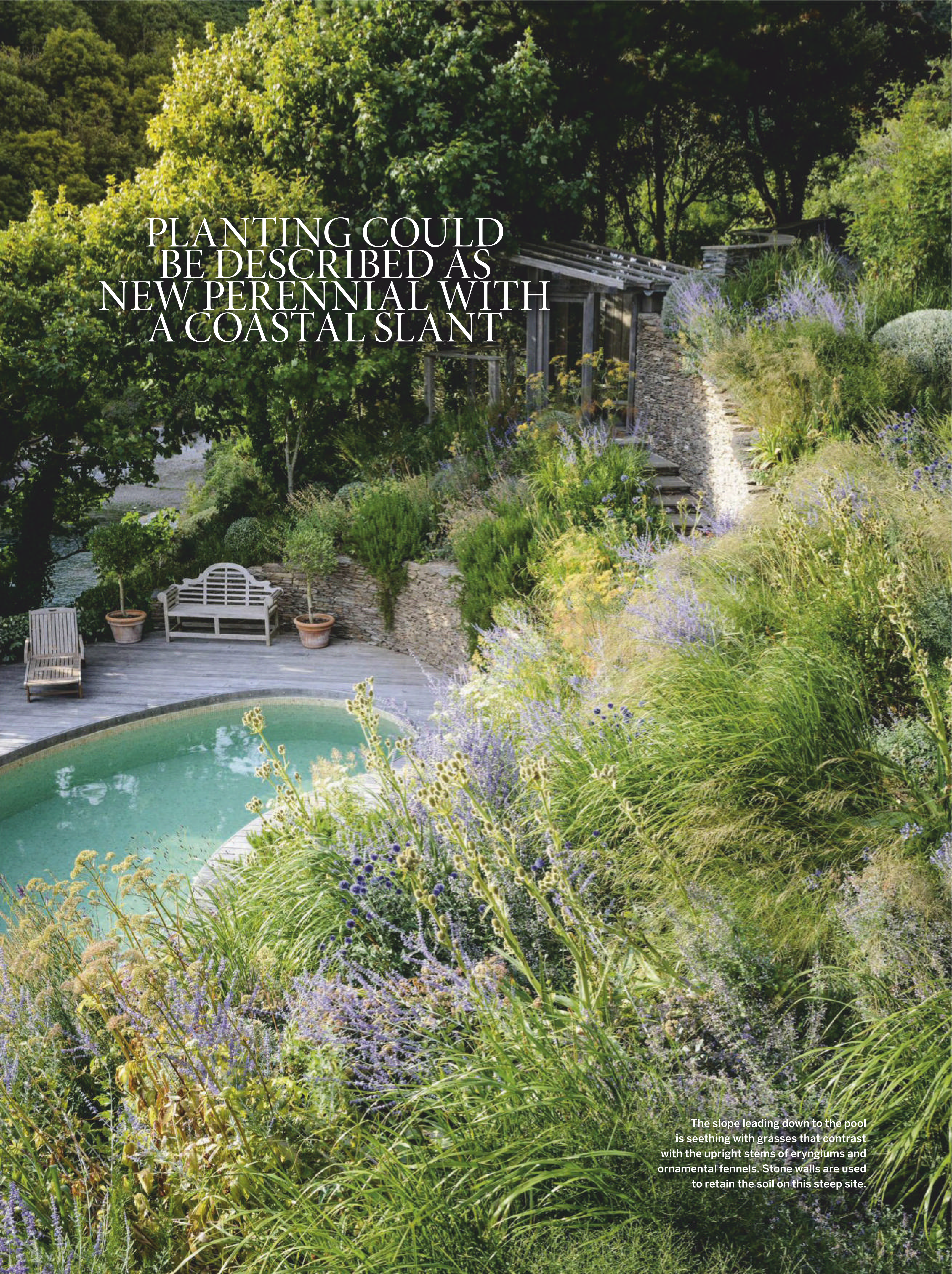
The approach to the house itself was originally an unflattering tarmac drive with parking next to the house and rendered walls that impeded views of the sea-creek below. Duncan explains that the space lacked any connection with the surrounding landscape and that the garden areas were quite disjointed, with planting of the kind typically associated with the coast – phormiums, cordylines, olearias and the like. He wanted to create unity between the garden, the surrounding countryside and the seascape beyond.

The first step was to remove the driveway, digging down into the bedrock to create depth for new borders, and harvesting the stone beneath for use in the beautiful dry-stone walls that define the space and retain the soil in the sloping borders. All of the stone used was, at one time or another, quarried directly from the site.

The parking area is now situated atop the slope above the house, and visitors are greeted with spectacular views of the garden and stone walls that gently undulate down to the house and sea beyond. A path leads the way through the borders towards the house in a more leisurely, atmospheric approach. The style of planting could be described as New Perennial with a coastal slant. For Duncan, it has been a matter of trial and error to find out what does and doesn't work in this extreme location.

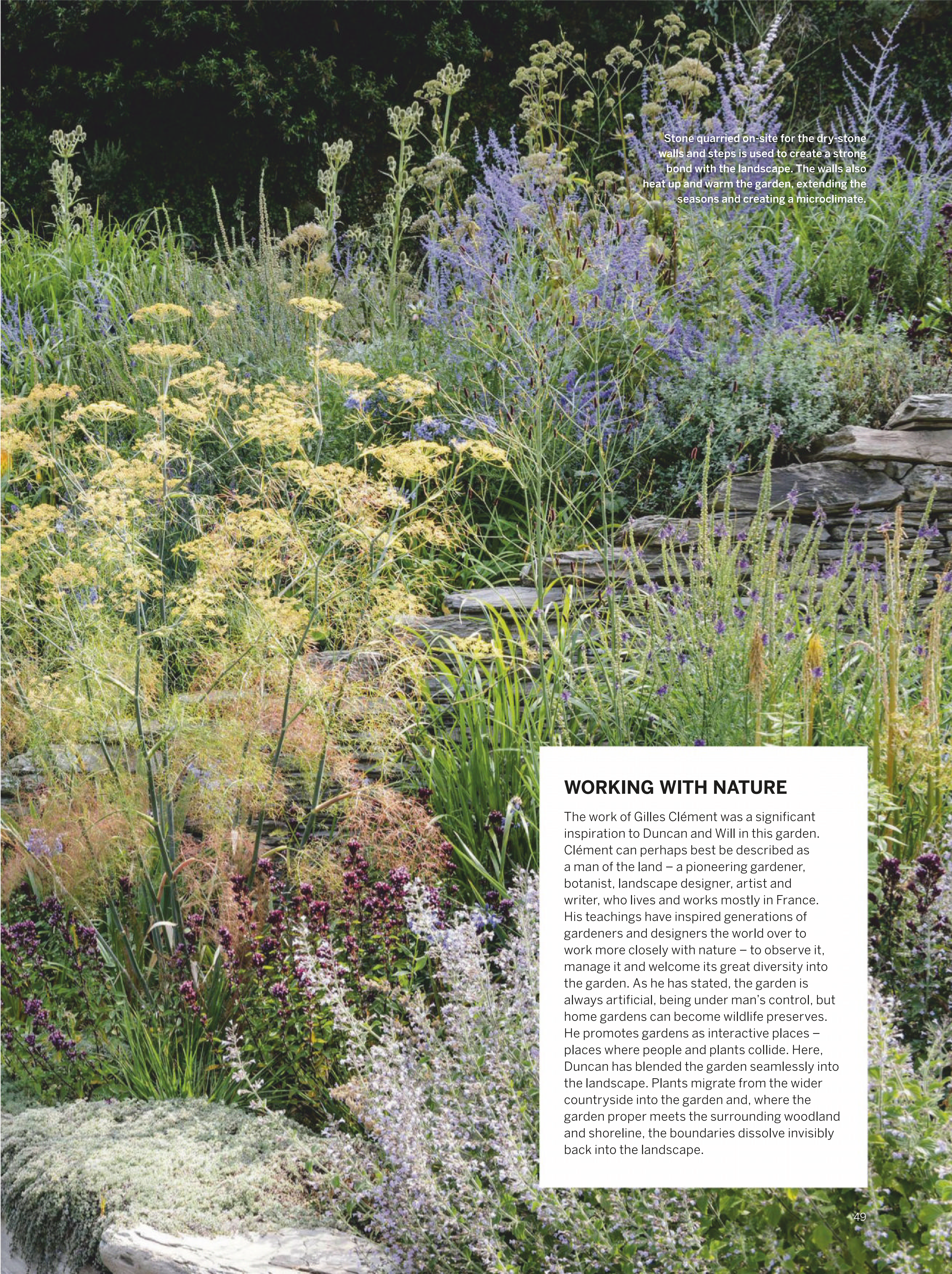
Duncan treated the sheltered areas, further away from the sea, more like an inland garden. *Symphyotrichum turbinellum*, *Doellingeria umbellata* and *Aloysia citrodora* perform very well ▷

To continue turn to page 51



PLANTING COULD BE DESCRIBED AS NEW PERENNIAL WITH A COASTAL SLANT

The slope leading down to the pool is seething with grasses that contrast with the upright stems of eryngiums and ornamental fennels. Stone walls are used to retain the soil on this steep site.

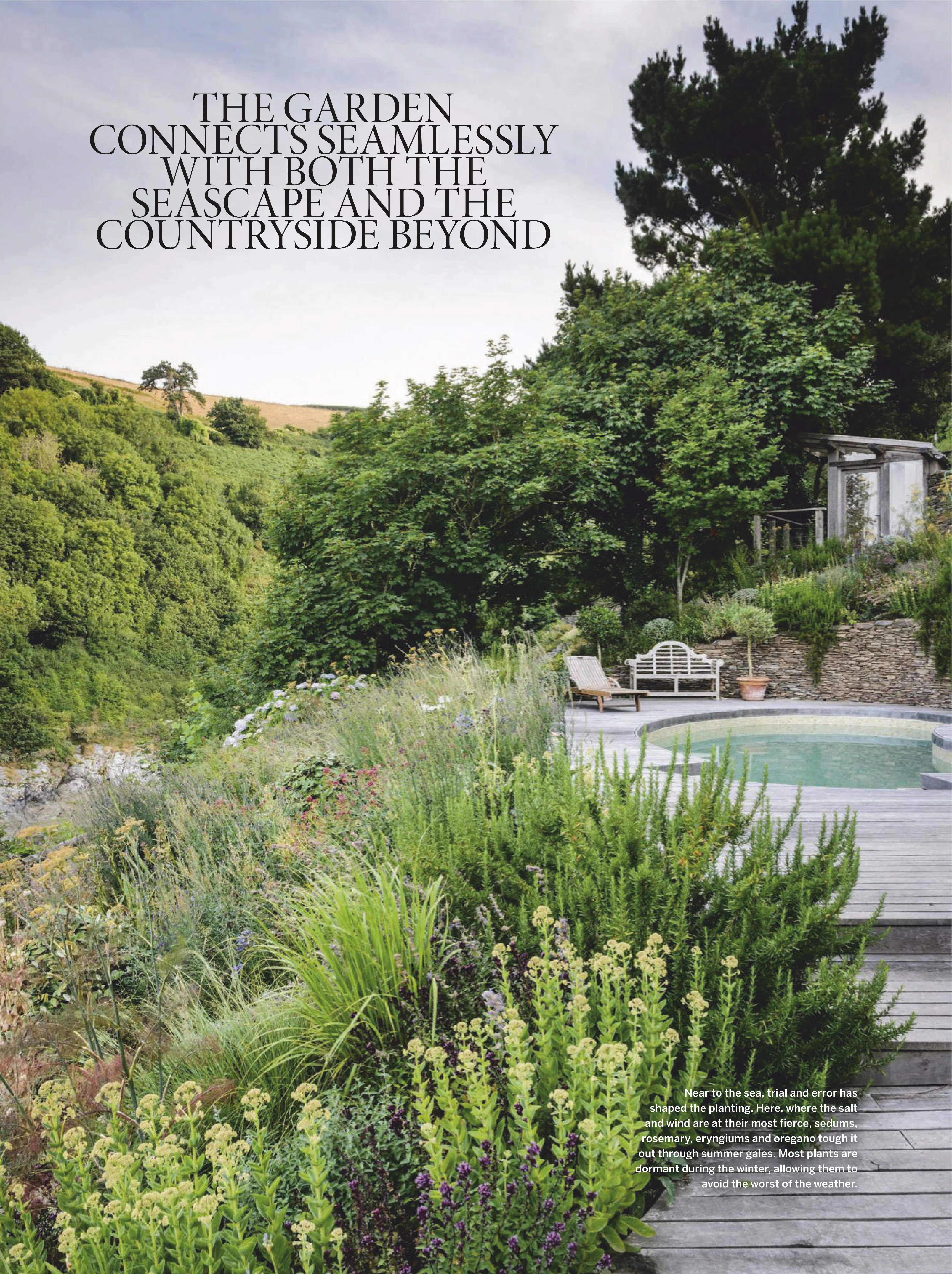


Stone quarried on-site for the dry-stone walls and steps is used to create a strong bond with the landscape. The walls also heat up and warm the garden, extending the seasons and creating a microclimate.

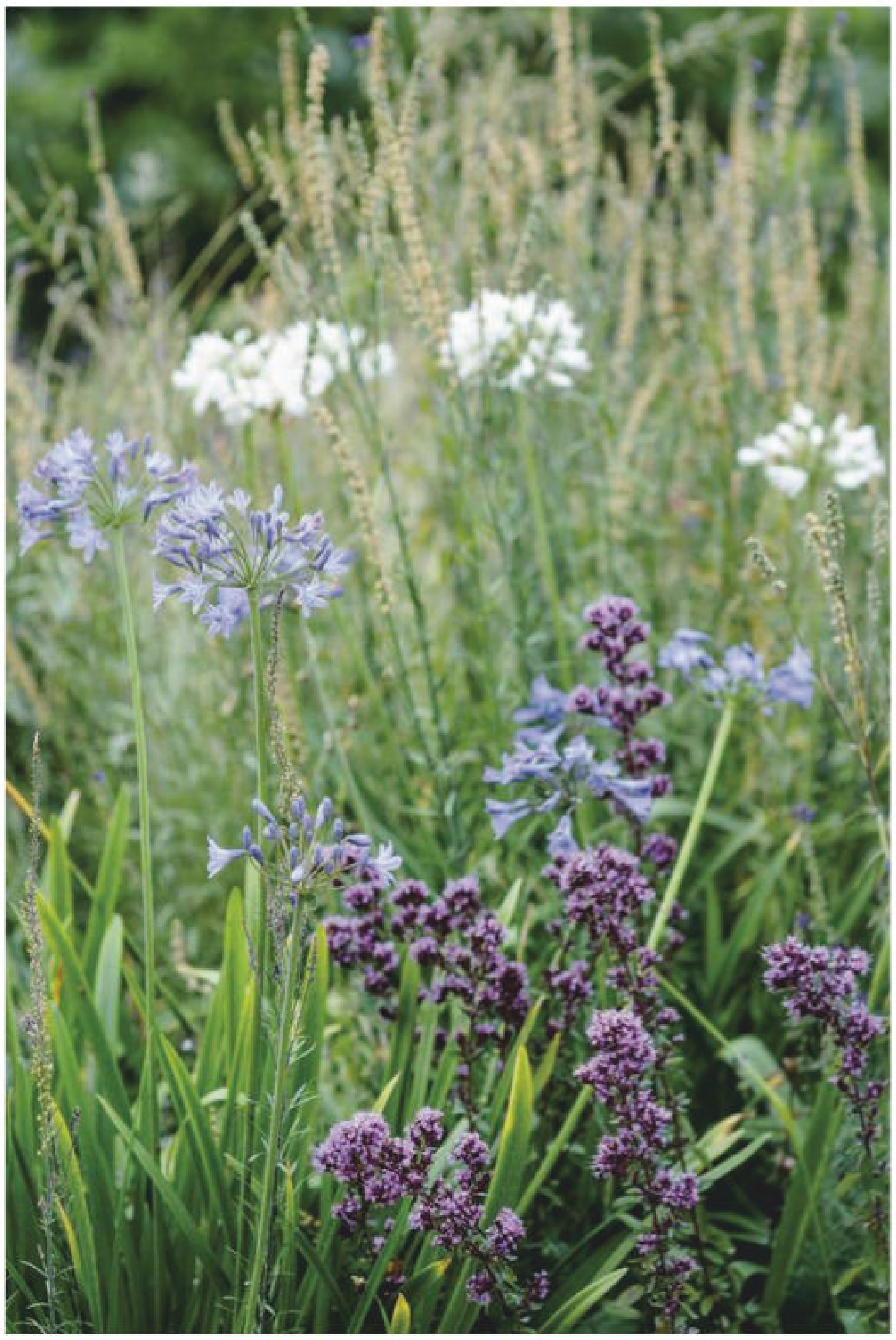
WORKING WITH NATURE

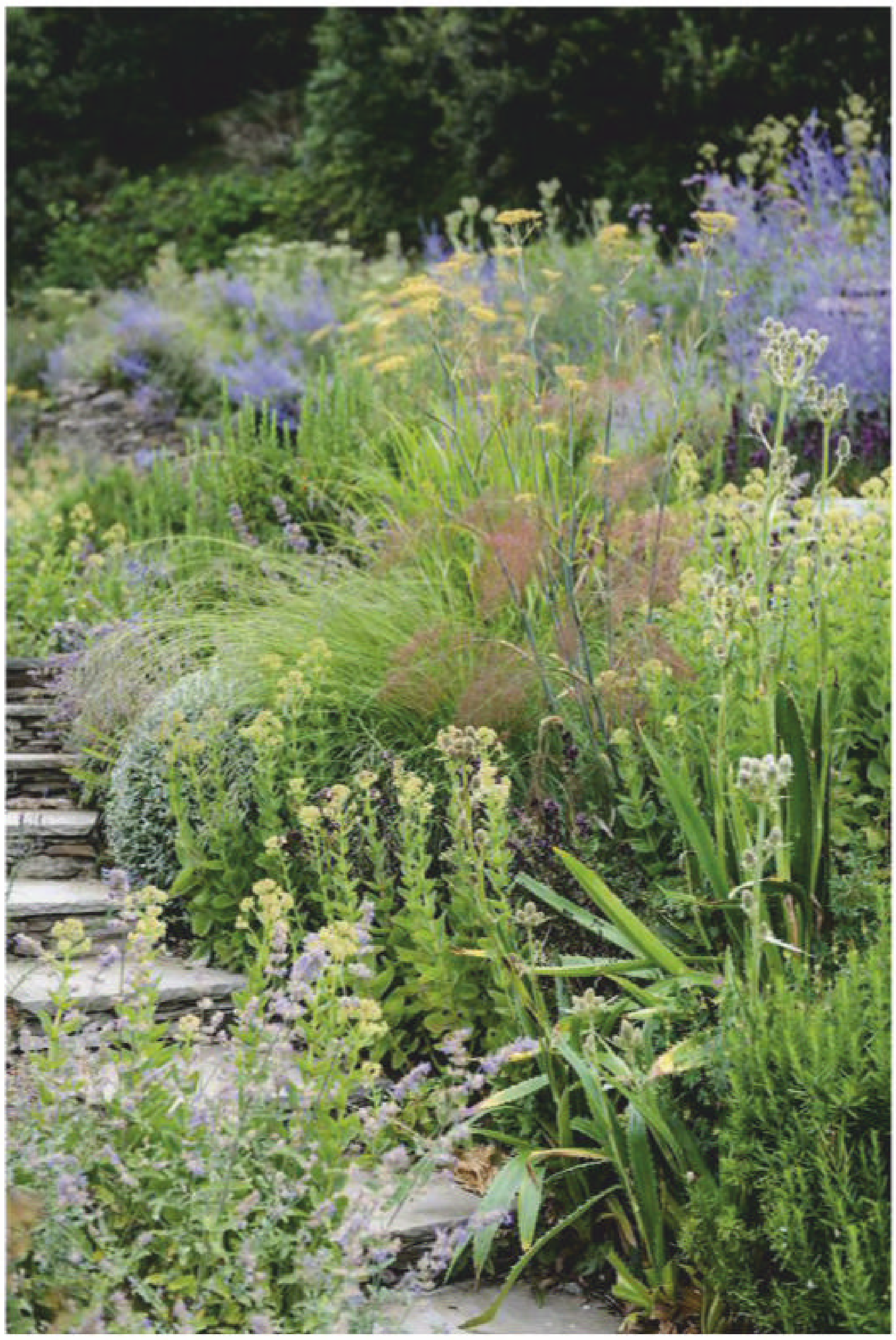
The work of Gilles Clément was a significant inspiration to Duncan and Will in this garden. Clément can perhaps best be described as a man of the land – a pioneering gardener, botanist, landscape designer, artist and writer, who lives and works mostly in France. His teachings have inspired generations of gardeners and designers the world over to work more closely with nature – to observe it, manage it and welcome its great diversity into the garden. As he has stated, the garden is always artificial, being under man's control, but home gardens can become wildlife preserves. He promotes gardens as interactive places – places where people and plants collide. Here, Duncan has blended the garden seamlessly into the landscape. Plants migrate from the wider countryside into the garden and, where the garden proper meets the surrounding woodland and shoreline, the boundaries dissolve invisibly back into the landscape.

THE GARDEN CONNECTS SEAMLESSLY WITH BOTH THE SEASCAPE AND THE COUNTRYSIDE BEYOND



Near to the sea, trial and error has shaped the planting. Here, where the salt and wind are at their most fierce, sedums, rosemary, eryngiums and oregano tough it out through summer gales. Most plants are dormant during the winter, allowing them to avoid the worst of the weather.





Above left Through a veil of *Linaria purpurea* seedheads, *Agapanthus* Headbourne hybrids and *Origanum laevigatum* 'Herrenhausen' combine.

Above right A mix of plants, including *Nepeta racemosa* 'Walker's Low' and *Eryngium agavifolium,* tumble over the stone steps that lead down the garden's steep slope. *Hylotelephium telephium* subsp. *ruprechtii*, the showy orpine, is particularly tolerant of drought and salt, and is a beautiful contrast when partnered with the rust-coloured fennel, *Foeniculum vulgare* 'Purpureum'.

▷ in this environment. Nearer to the shore, halophytic (salt-tolerant) plants ,such as *Hylotelephium telephium* subsp. *ruprechtii*, *Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Tuscan Blue', *Perovskia* 'Blue Spire', *Centranthus ruber* and *Eryngium agavifolium* can thrive in the salt-laden spray. The tall, airy, self-sowing *Eryngium ebracteatum* has done particularly well here and brings a lovely natural continuity to the planting as it weaves its way through the borders. Grasses add fluidity to the composition; *Calamagrostis brachytricha* and *Eragrostis curvula* (love grass) have a strong presence. Among the soft, lithe perennials and grasses, Duncan has positioned the more static *Myrtus communis* and *Teucrium fruticans* in a way that complements the rocky headlands that jut out across the bay. The view across the garden is now much more in keeping with the landscape and seascape. The sea of perennials and grasses blurs in the wind, contrasting markedly with clipped shrubs and, in an abstract way, mimicking the movement of the sea against the steadfast rocky coastline.

The garden wraps around the house and gently slopes down to a bleached, oak deck and pool. Render walls have been replaced with smart, metal, see-through railings, revealing spectacular views across the bay. Beyond the deck, the garden drops away, tumbling down the cliff face towards the water's edge. Here Duncan has opted to tread carefully with the design, adopting a more natural style. He cites the French gardener Gilles Clément (in particular his work *Le Belvédère des Lichens*), as an inspiration. The idea is to work with, not against nature. As Duncan explains, it's a matter of embracing and celebrating what grows here naturally and limiting additional planting. This spray zone, just above the tidal area, bears the brunt of the winter storms. The plants have to be able to take the salt spray head on and cope with the searing summer sun. Specialised native flora, such as thrift and sea cabbage, survive by inhabiting the nooks and crannies in the rocks. Lichens decorate the rocks with shades of charcoal, grey-green and orange-yellow, and are included as part of the garden. To allow access to this special place, steps have been carefully constructed from rocks harvested at low tide, and then installed into the cliff face. This was done with the utmost care so as not to disturb the existing plants. The steps lead down to the water and flat, oak decking, or puddles, have been built into the rocks, like abstract rock pools.

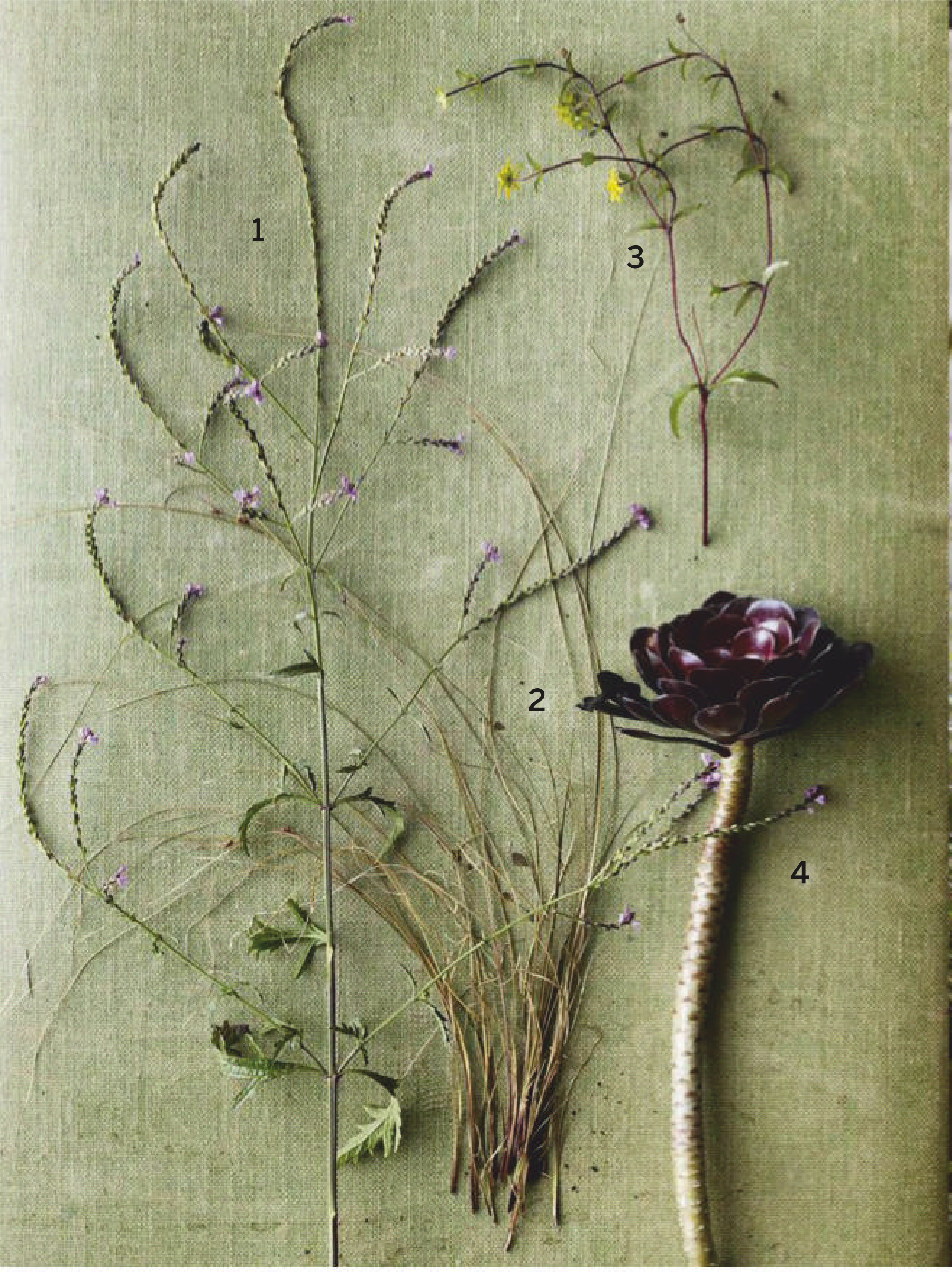
Duncan and Will have made a beautiful garden on a difficult site close to the sea. The garden connects seamlessly with the wider landscape, and is a wonderful exhibition of what is possible when the artist and the gardener collaborate. □

USEFUL INFORMATION
For more information on Duncan's work visit **duncannuttall.co.uk**

KEEPING COOL

Head gardener Benjamin William Pope bucks the trend for exuberant, summer colour and instead chooses three elegant displays layered with character, charm and refinement to adorn hidden corners

WORDS **BENJAMIN WILLIAM POPE** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**



OLD FRIENDS

In the heat of summer, I often head to an old part of the garden where stone walls and rambling wisteria create pockets of cool shade. It provides a moment's relief from the intensity of the sun's heat, as well as an atmospheric location to display containers. Standing guard by the door of an old dovecote are two terracotta pots. Resolute in their stance, they support the elderly aeoniums that twist and turn above, nodding to one another as if having a conversation.

How to achieve the look

Container and composition

Location often dictates the tone of a display and this one required something dramatic and characterful. The weathered pots are traditional, simple and elegant, with a gentle curved lip, but large enough to steady taller plants. The aeoniums are a key element, their neglected maturity referencing both character and the past, while their bronzed stems complement the silvered oak door. Informal clouds of *Verbena officinalis* var. *grandiflora* 'Bampton' and *Sanvitalia procumbens* finish the display. Scrambling through bronze sedge, they softly crown the pots, revealing discreet bursts of colour to inquisitive spectators. The effect is both cultivated and naturalistic, once loved but now perhaps forgotten.

Cultivation and care

The aeoniums are top-heavy so select pots that have weight. Cover the drainage holes with crocks and fill the container with a peat-free, multi-purpose compost, with added John Innes for stability and drainage. Position the *Aeonium* centrally, firming the surrounding compost to secure the plant in place. Evenly space the other plants around the outer edges, and plant carefully, being sure not to disturb the *Aeonium* root ball. Water in well to firm the compost. The containers should not require feeding, but water once or twice a week throughout the summer months. Before the first frost, dismantle the display and containerise the aeoniums, moving them into a greenhouse or conservatory, and reduce watering.

Plants

1 *Verbena officinalis* var. *grandiflora* 'Bampton'
Bushy, upright perennial with fine, wiry stems, deep-purple foliage and clusters of tiny, vivid, purple-pink flowers. 50cm. RHS H6†.

2 *Carex buchananii*
Tough, evergreen sedge, whose bronze leaves have orange highlights. 50cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

3 *Sanvitalia procumbens*
Sprawling annual with dark-red stems and yellow, daisy-like flowers. 20cm. RHS H1C, USDA 2a-11.

4 *Aeonium* 'Zwartkop'
Succulent, evergreen perennial with statuesque rosettes of almost black leaves. 1.2m. AGM*. RHS H1C.

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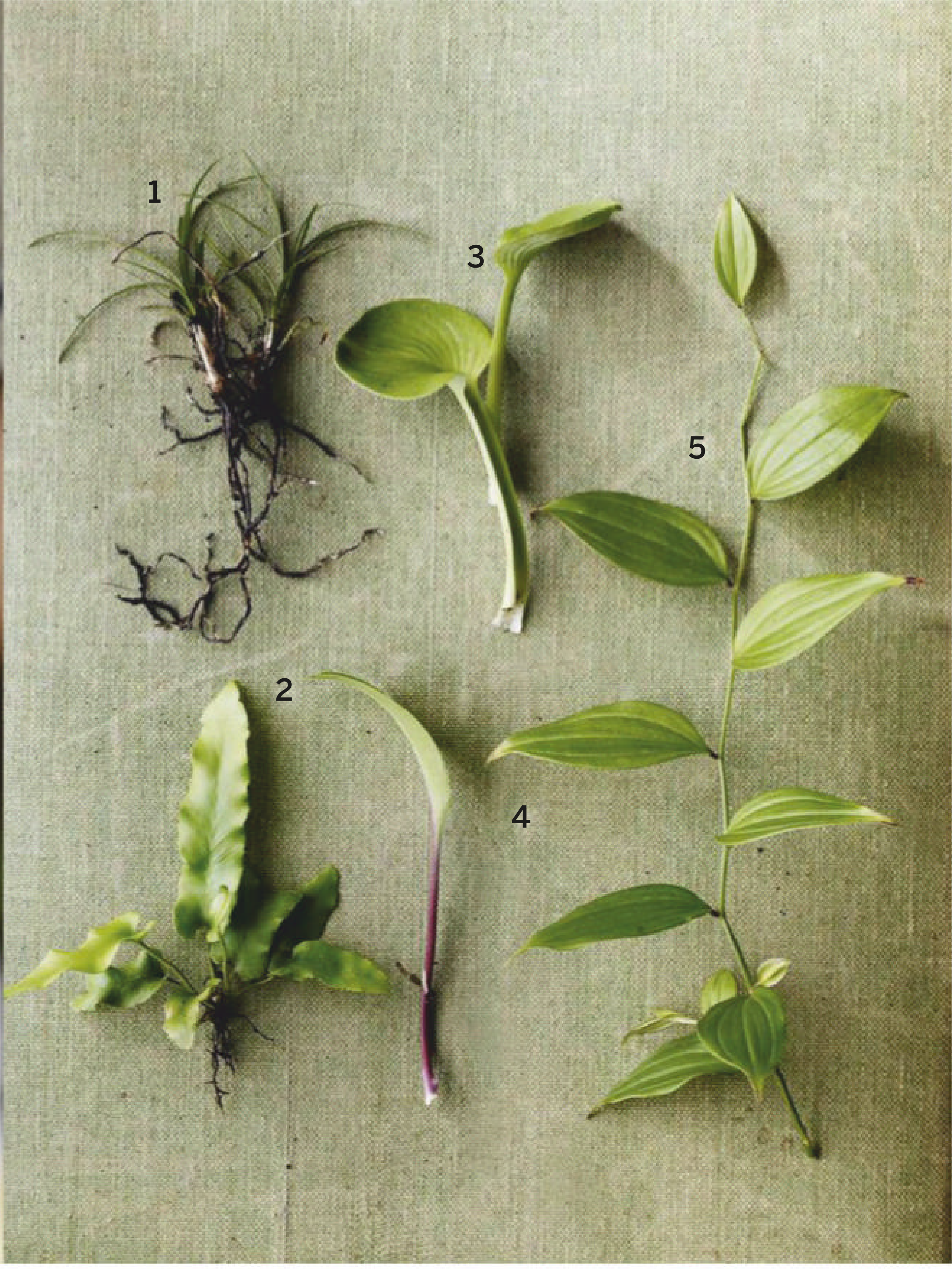
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.



REFLECTING EAST

For many of us, summer is when containers brim with brightly coloured flowers, shouting their enjoyment of the warmer weather. But sometimes it is nice to do something different. Set on an old silver tray once used to serve afternoon tea, this display describes a forest landscape. Cool and relaxing, miniature hostas and small woodlanders nestle alongside decaying branches. A calming arrangement for any part of the garden that hides away from bright sun.

How to achieve the look

Container and composition

This display celebrates form and texture, from the lusciously curved leaves of the *Hosta* through to the bony fingers of the old branches. The colour palette is restricted to various shades of green, allowing the eye to focus on the highlights and shadows of the foliage. A large, metal serving tray provides the base, its filigree edges packed with moss to hold back the compost while enabling good drainage. Rising from the tray, the mound of *Ophiopogon japonicus* 'Minor' and *Leptinella squalida* 'Platt's Black' form the perfect backdrop for the bold leaves of the *Hosta* and *Asplenium*. At its summit, the arching stems of a young *Disporum* give a nod to the exotic while adding additional height.

Cultivation and care

Form a sturdy base with the branches, arranging them on the tray asymmetrically so that they appear natural. Screw them together if required and avoid displaying any cut edges. Using moss, line the sides of the tray before filling it with a mixture of multi-purpose compost and John Innes. Build up the compost level as you plant, leaving enough space between key specimens such as the *Hosta* so you can fully appreciate their form. Remember that plants with the largest root ball should be placed near the centre of the display where the compost depth is greatest. Water using a fine rose and feed with a liquid fertiliser every two or three weeks during the growing season.

Plants

1 *Ophiopogon japonicus* 'Minor'
Compact, evergreen perennial with narrow leaves. 8cm. RHS H6.

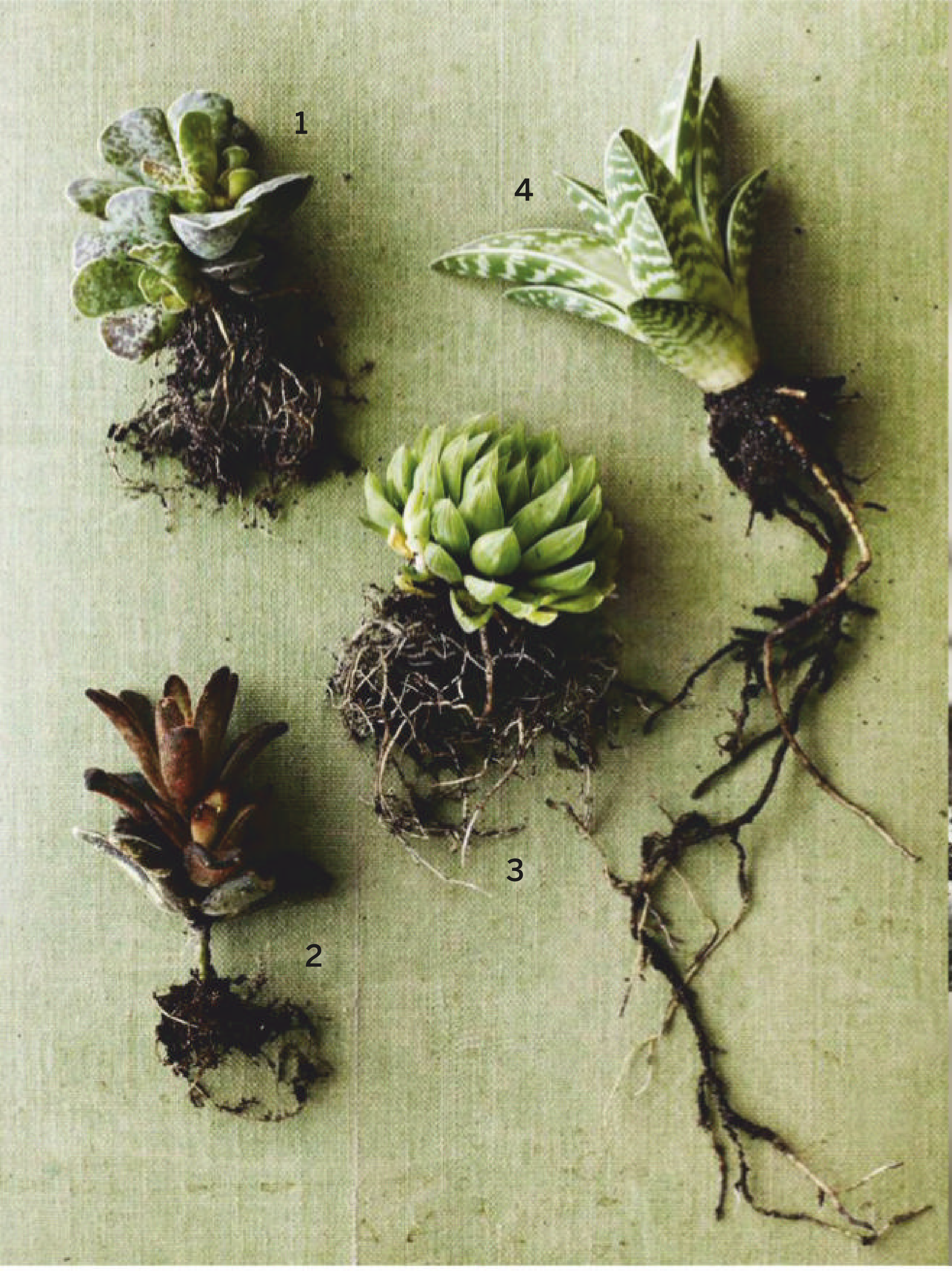
2 *Asplenium scolopendrium*
Glossy, arching, evergreen fern. 50cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

3 *Hosta* 'Giantland Sunny Mouse Ears'
Miniature form with bold, rounded heart-shaped leaves 10cm. RHS H6.

4 *Hosta* 'Emeralds and Rubies'
Miniature form with elegant, tapering leaves. 20cm. RHS H6.

5 *Disporum longistylum* 'Night Heron'
Semi-evergreen perennial, with pale-green flowers and glossy leaves with dark staining. 1.4m. AGM. RHS H5.

ORWELL DOWNS
FRED. MILLER



FIT FOR PURPOSE

With the risk of frost well and truly over, the annual migration of houseplants and succulents begins. While many houseplants require a little shade, most succulents relish a sunny spot and require little maintenance. Huddling in a free-draining colander, these bold contenders sit shoulder-to-shoulder, showing off their individual charm. Perfect on a garden table or shelf, this display will still be looking great when you return from your summer holiday.

How to achieve the look

Container and composition
Able to thrive with little water, most common succulents will grow happily in all manner of containers, provided they have ample drainage. Spotted at a car-boot sale, this vibrant, red colander, has a confident appeal that complements the striking appearance of the plants. The young succulents are planted close together, jostling for space where their contrasting foliage works to great visual effect. Although this display contains four different species, a generous planting of a single species will look just as good. Focus on contrasting foliage shape and colour, as well as growth habit. Alternatively, match size and colour of plants for a more subtle and refined look.

Cultivation and care
Use a free-draining, soil-based compost that is relatively low in nutrients. I use John Innes No.2 with a handful of grit, at a ratio of 7:3. Ensure your container drains freely. If you're using more than one species, check that the plants have the same growing requirements before deciding on the final arrangement. Planting is a delicate operation; plant close together and don't be afraid to firm down the compost. Cover the surface with a thin layer of grit and water in well. After care includes periodic watering in dry conditions (about once every week or two in summer) and, later, protection from frost. After a couple of seasons, lift and replant, incorporating fresh soil. Any divisions and spares can be kept for planting other containers.

Plants

1 *Adromischus cooperi*
Compact, ground-hugging succulent with swollen, glaucous leaves that are speckled purple. 8cm. AGM. RHS H2.

2 *Kalanchoe tomentosa* 'Chocolate Soldier'
Multi-branching succulent with simple oval leaves covered in tiny brown hairs, giving it a velvety appearance. 80cm. RHS H2.

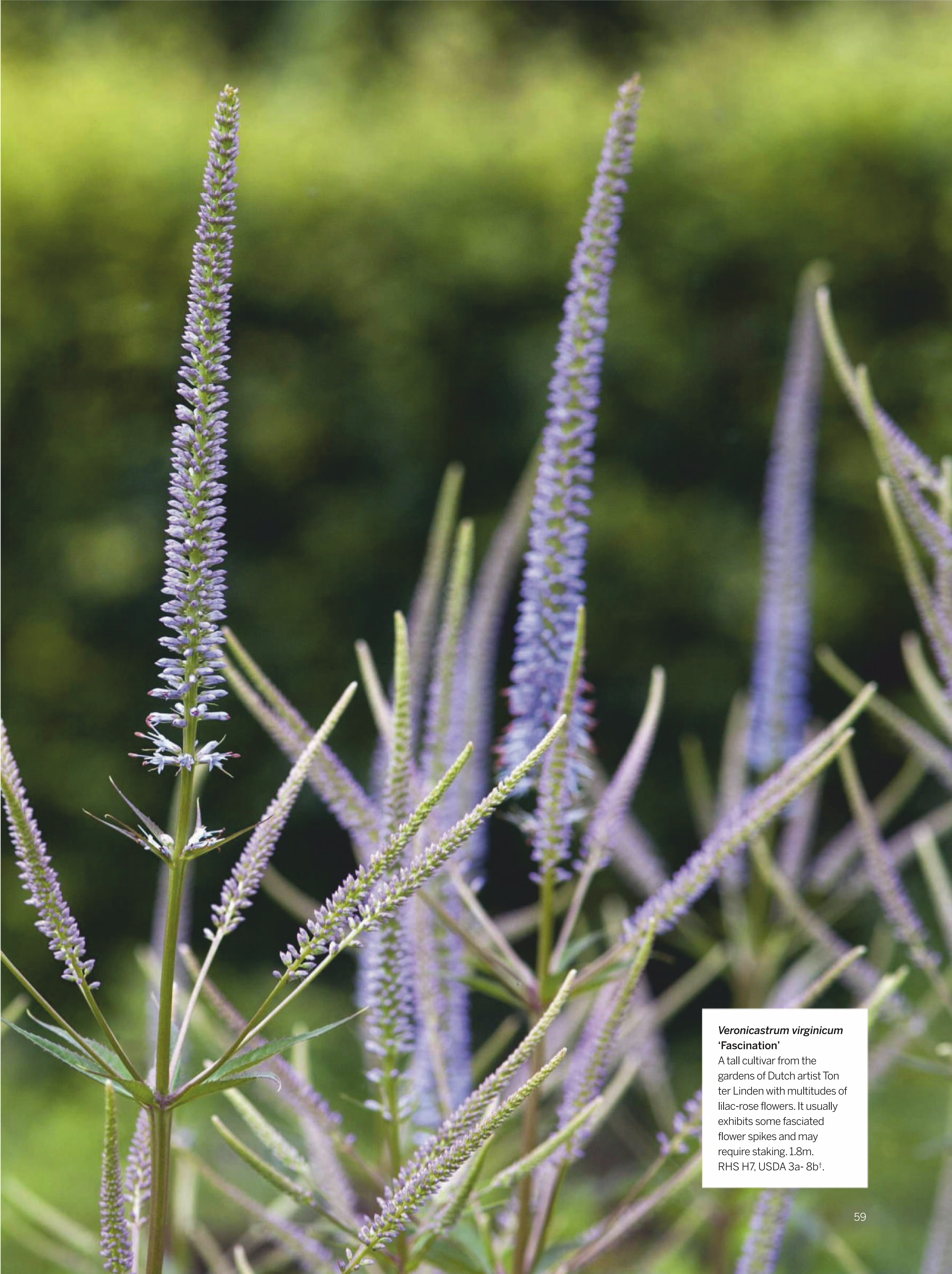
3 *Haworthia cymbiformis*
Stemless succulent with rosettes of fleshy, mid-green leaves with darker striations. 8cm. RHS H2.

4 *Aloe variegata*
Clump-forming succulent with triangular leaves marked with rough, white bands. 30cm. AGM. RHS H1C.

VERONICASTRUM

Elegant, hardy and easy to cultivate, veronicastrums offer a long season of interest and are useful to pollinating insects

WORDS **MARINA CHRISTOPHER** PHOTOGRAPHS **TORIE CHUGG**



Veronicastrum virginicum
'Fascination'
A tall cultivar from the gardens of Dutch artist Ton ter Linden with multitudes of lilac-rose flowers. It usually exhibits some fasciated flower spikes and may require staking. 1.8m. RHS H7, USDA 3a- 8b†.

The qualities I look for in a perennial are hardiness, ease of cultivation, long season of interest, and their attraction to pollinating insects and other beneficial wildlife. The genus *Veronicastrum* has these qualities in spades. Originally this genus was placed within *Veronica*, but differs in having whorls of leaves and strong vertical stems. The two main species used in gardens are *Veronicastrum virginicum*, named by Linnaeus in 1753 after what was at the time known as the Colony of Virginia, and *Veronicastrum sibiricum*, which was first described by Linnaeus in 1762 from a plant found in the Dauria region of Siberia (modern-day Transbaikal). *V. sibiricum* is a rather coarserplant than *V. virginicum*, and is generally shorter in stature. *V. sibiricum* plants also have broader leaves and tend to bloom earlier, often without the secondary flower spikes and the tapers have a tendency to lean in the same direction towards the horizontal creating a slightly quirky floral display. Both have slender dark-green lanceolate leaves with finely toothed margins and a distinct midrib and vary in degree of hirsuteness depending on the variety or cultivar.

The flowers on both are small and tubular with protruding stamens and style packed closely together forming a long tapering spike: a magnet for long and short-tongued bees that feast on both nectar and pollen. Butterflies, hoverflies and other insects also descend on the numerous flowers opening from the base to the apex over a number of days. Subsidiary flower spikes open and develop after the main stem has flowered. Veronicastrums provide strong vertical elements in a border and most require little or no staking, another bonus for this long-lived perennial. The colour spectrum of veronicastrum ranges from white through pink, lavender, lilac-rose to a bluish-purple – all colours particularly favoured by bees – and their slender, vertical habit allows insects to find them easily. They are slow-growing, clump-forming, deciduous plants that improve year on year.

There are several pink veronicasturms available and some of these are sold under a variety of names. *V. virginicum* f. *roseum* (also known as *V. virginicum* var. *incarnatum*), for example, is to my mind almost identical to the cultivar *V. virginicum* f. *roseum* ‘Pink Glow’, and the plants I’ve obtained under these different names are all pale pink, the same height and flower together. More recent pink introductions include *V.* ‘Adoration’ a *V. virginicum* cultivar selected by Piet Oudolf with striking reddish-brown stems, a good strongly branched upright habit and lilac-pink candles, and *V. virginicum* ‘Erica’, which is shorter and flowers earlier, with glossy red-suffused emerging foliage, dark stems and reddish buds opening to mid-pink flowers. It was selected by the eminent German nurseryman Ernst Pagels responsible for many excellent garden plants still popular today including *Miscanthus sinensis* and *Salvia nemorosa* cultivars.

The tallest of the *Veronicastrum* cultivars can make majestic statements. My favourite is the 1.8m-high, lavender-blue *V. virginicum* ‘Lavendelturm’, another great selection by Ernst Pagels in 1998. It rarely requires staking, produces several subsidiary spikes and its skeletal remains last well into the winter providing templates for spiders’ webs and a seed feast for roving goldfinches. *V. virginicum* ‘Fascination’ probably has the strongest lilac-rose flowers but at 1.8m high does need to be staked and the flower stems have a tendency to fasciate (exhibiting abnormal fusion to give a flattened ribbon-like effect), which I find rather disfiguring although it is much-loved by others.

V. sibiricum cultivars do appear to have a more intense colour range and selections by Miranda and Hans Kramer at their nursery, De Hessenhof in the Netherlands have produced the very attractive *V. sibiricum* ‘Kobaltkaars’, which is the bluest *Veronicastrum* cultivar to date.

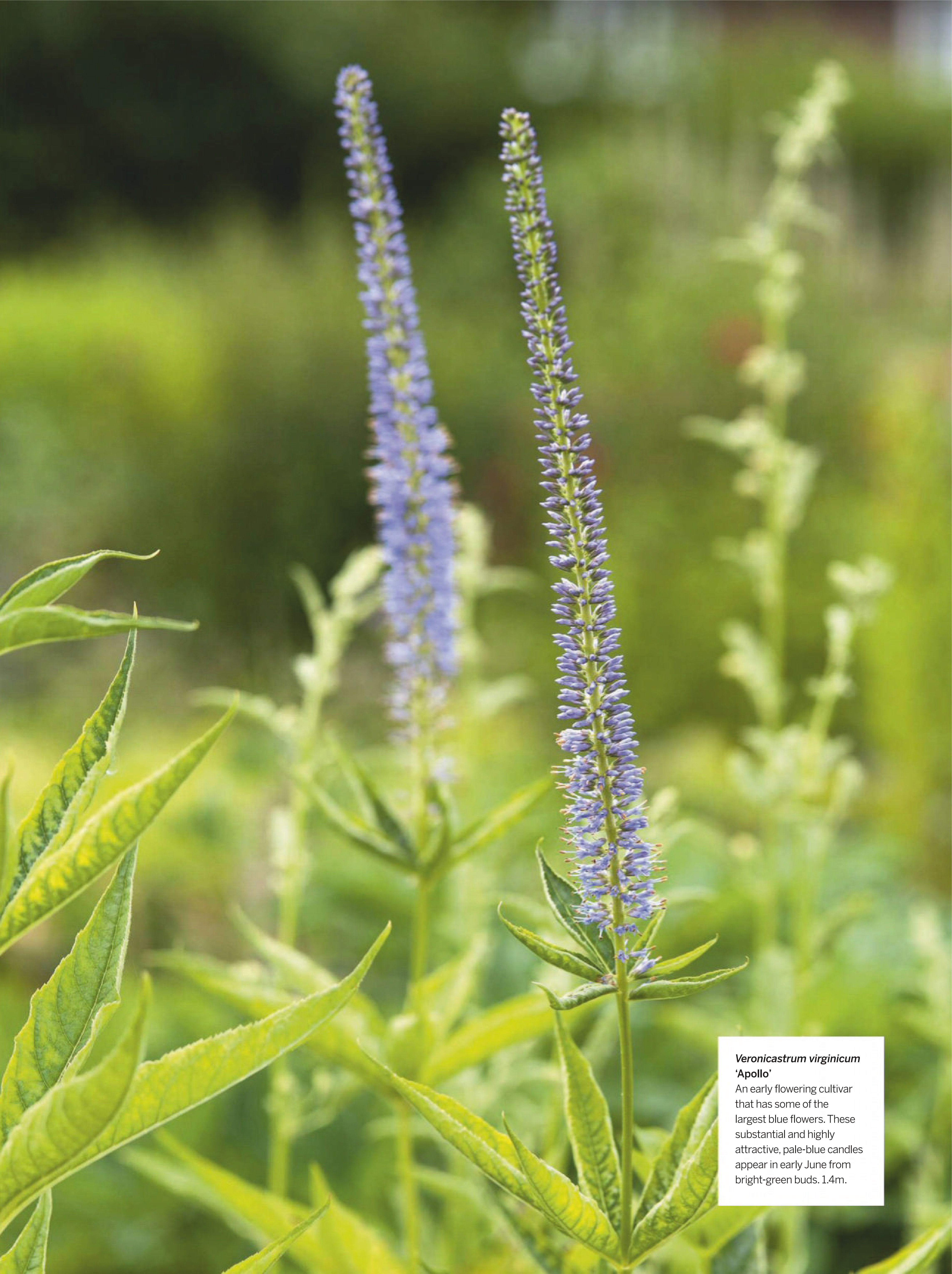
With their attractive flowers and seedheads, their skeletal autumn and winter silhouettes that provide strong vertical accents without the need to stake, and the nectar and pollen they provide for pollinating insects and seeds for birds, veronicastrums are an essential component for any naturalistic borders. □

- Author Marina Christopher is a nurserywoman who runs Phoenix Perennial Plants. Her recommendations for the best veronicastrums can be found over the next five pages.

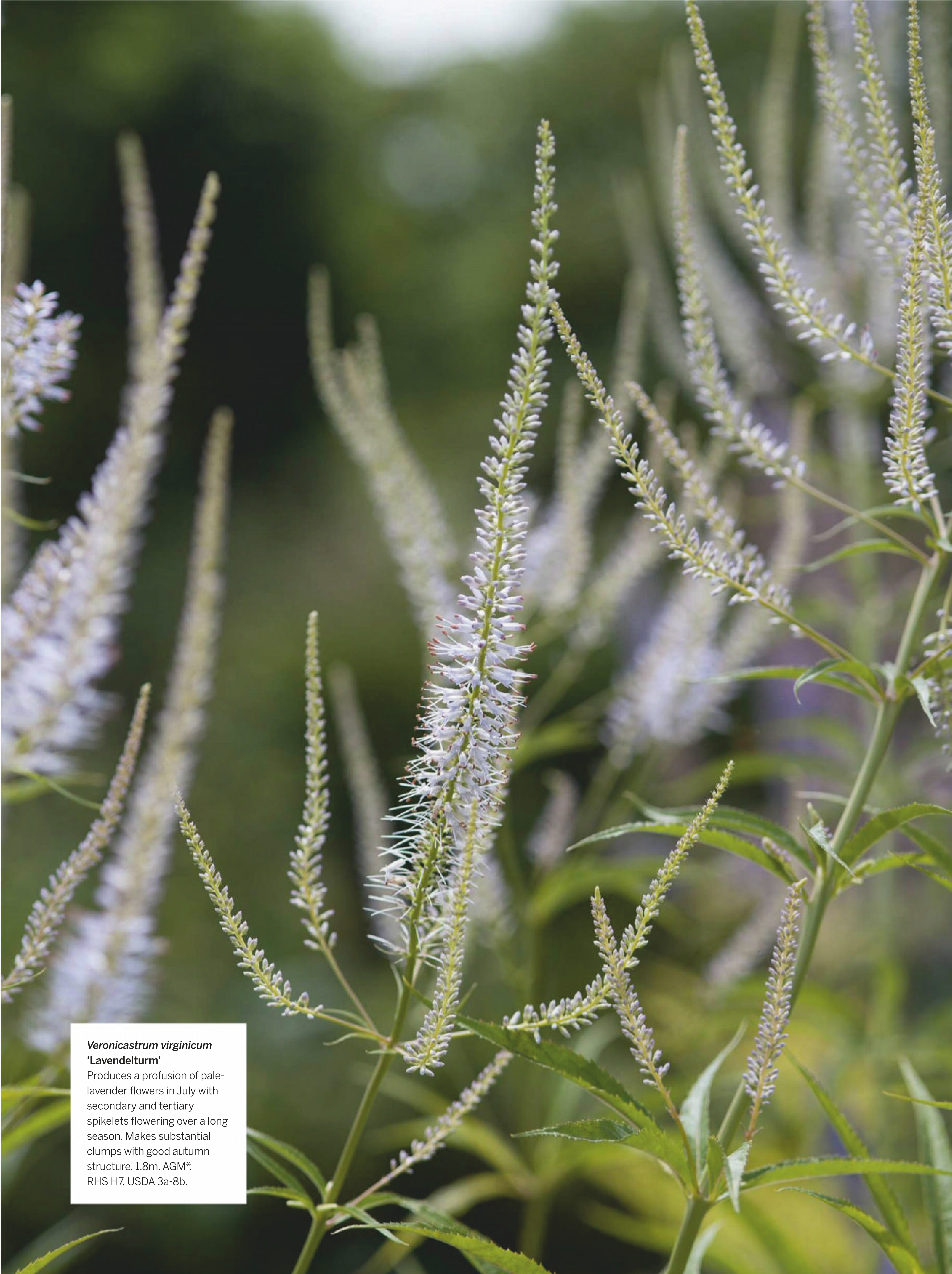
PLANT PROFILE

What Hardy herbaceous perennials that supply strong vertical accents in the garden. Common names include culver’s root, Bowman’s toot, black root and whorlywort.
Origins Eastern North America, East Asia, Japan, Korea, China, Siberia and Sakhalin Island.
Season Flowering season from June to September with structural interest through autumn and winter.
Size 1-1.8m.
Conditions Will tolerate most soils and a wide range of pH in sun or partial shade but not too dry.
Hardiness Most have a RHS hardiness rating of H7 (hardy to temperatures of -20C) and are suitable for gardens in USDA 3a-8b.

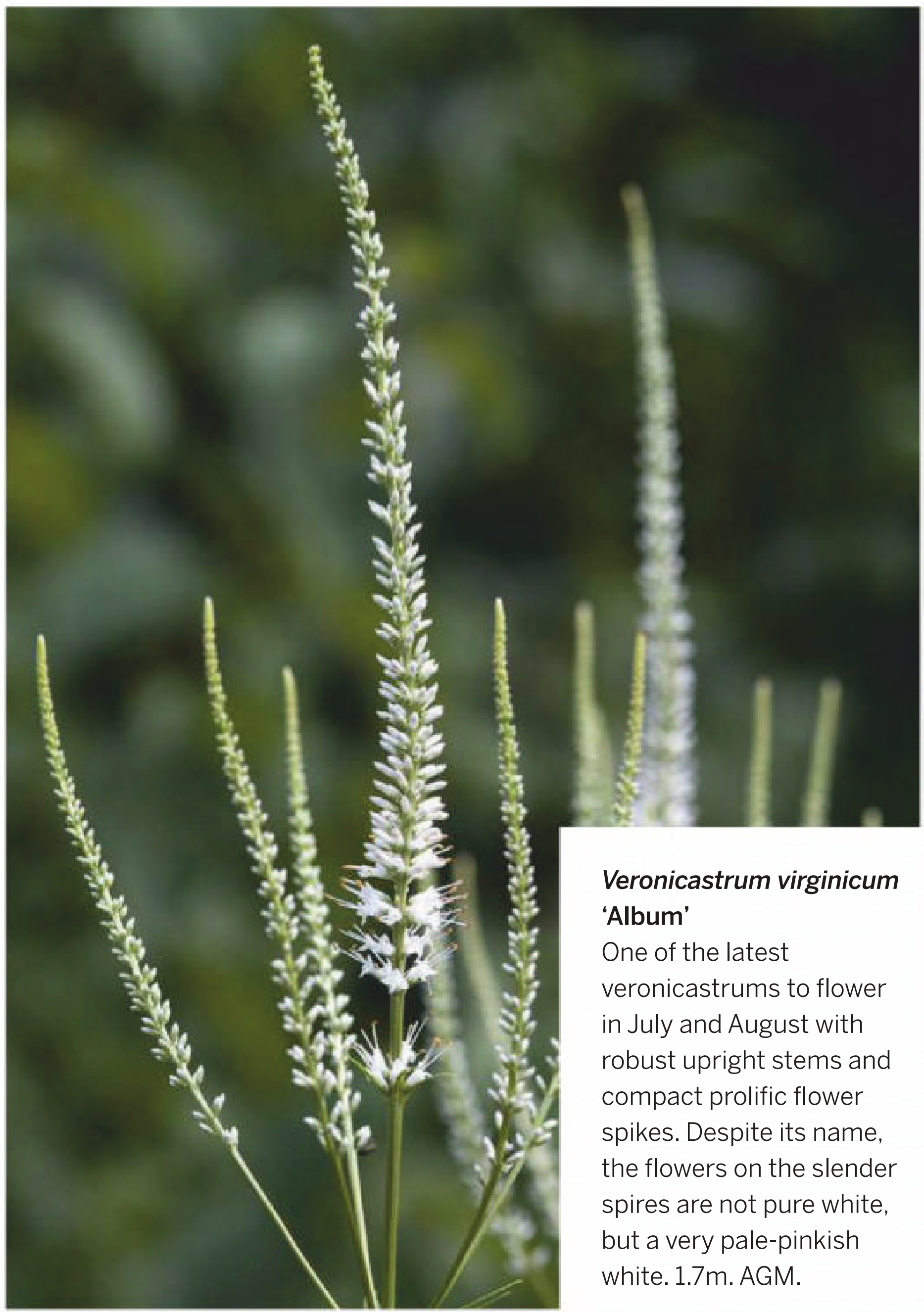
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.



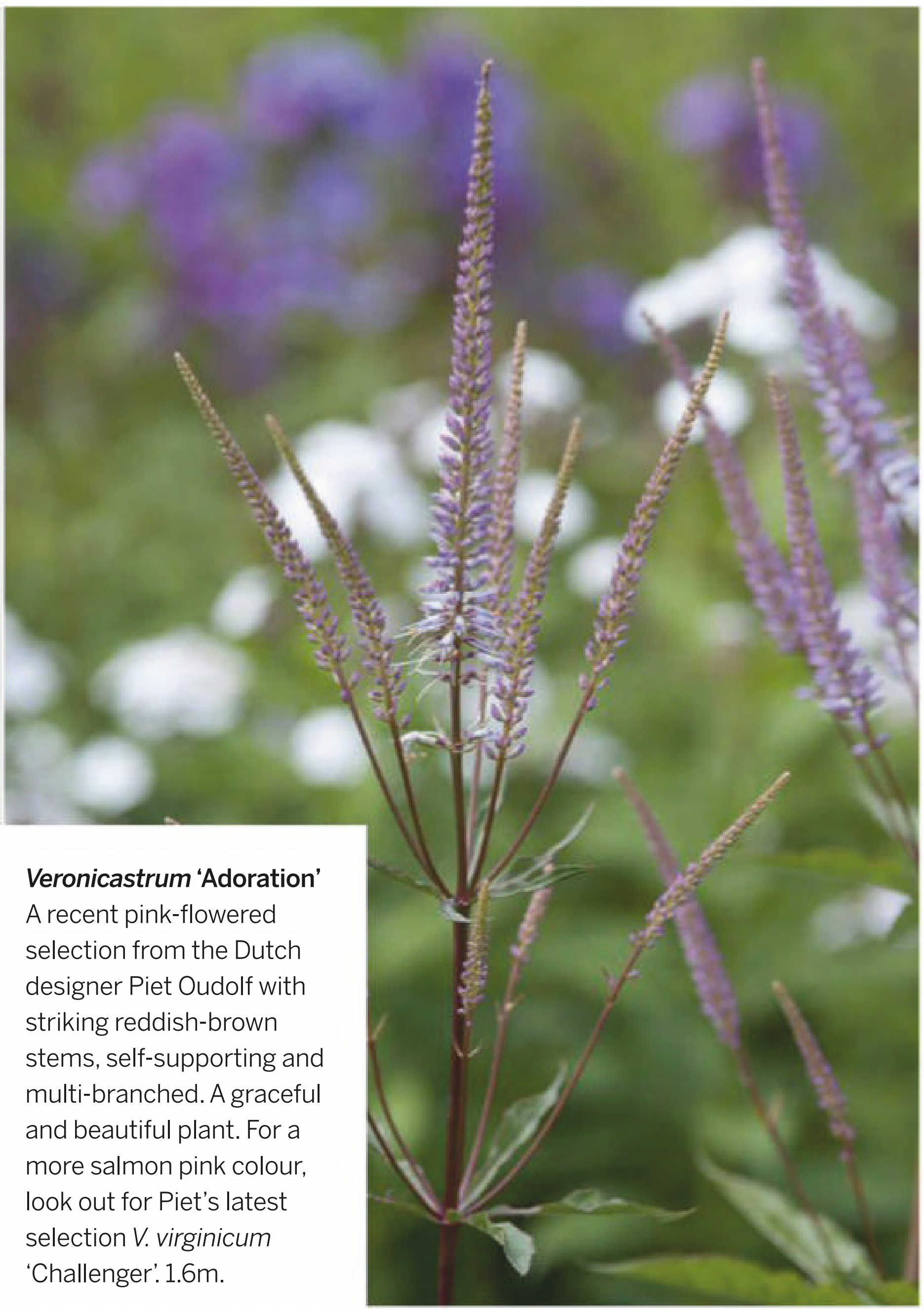
Veronicastrum virginicum **'Apollo'**
An early flowering cultivar that has some of the largest blue flowers. These substantial and highly attractive, pale-blue candles appear in early June from bright-green buds. 1.4m.



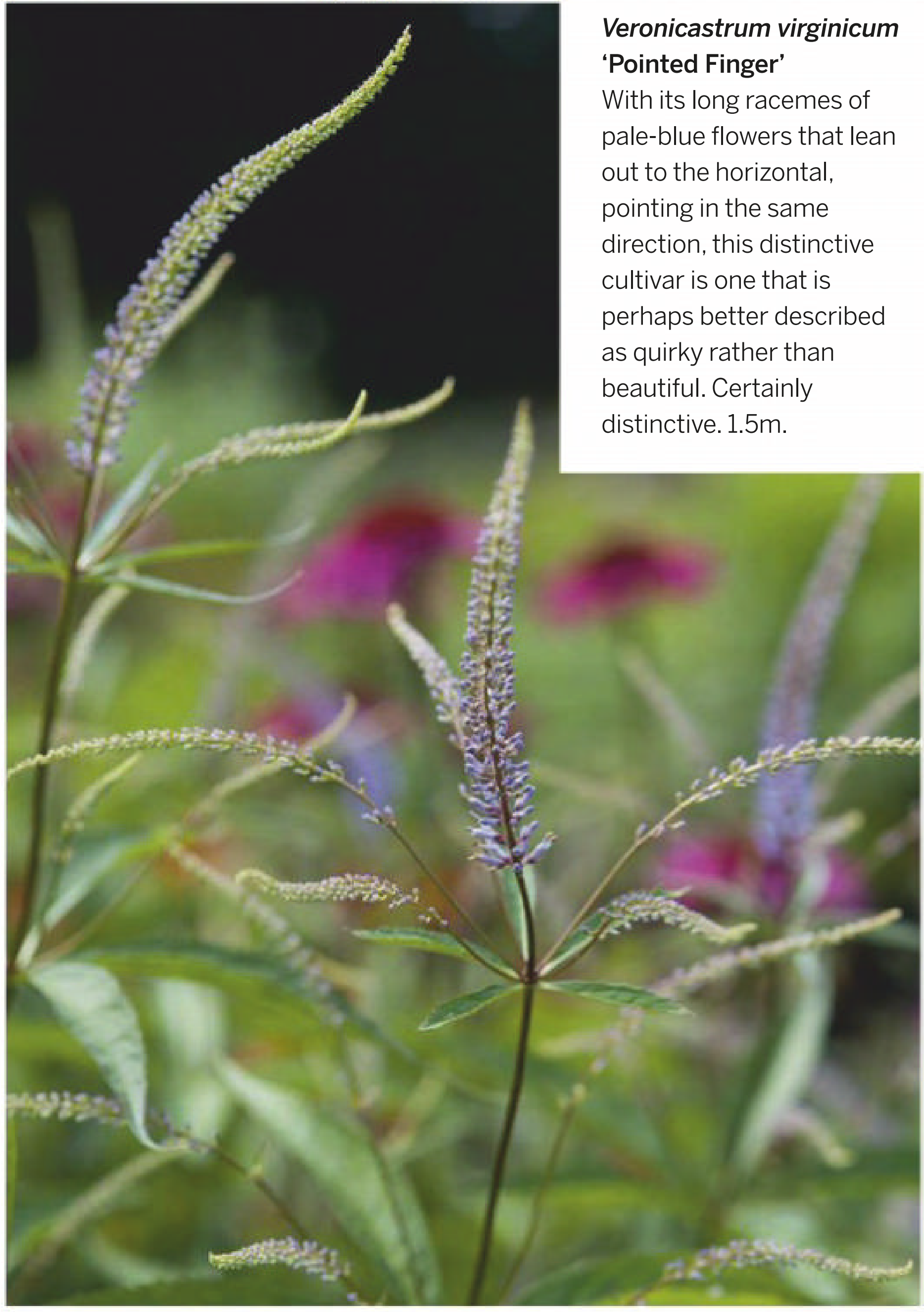
Veronicastrum virginicum
'Lavendelturm'
Produces a profusion of pale-lavender flowers in July with secondary and tertiary spikelets flowering over a long season. Makes substantial clumps with good autumn structure. 1.8m. AGM*. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.



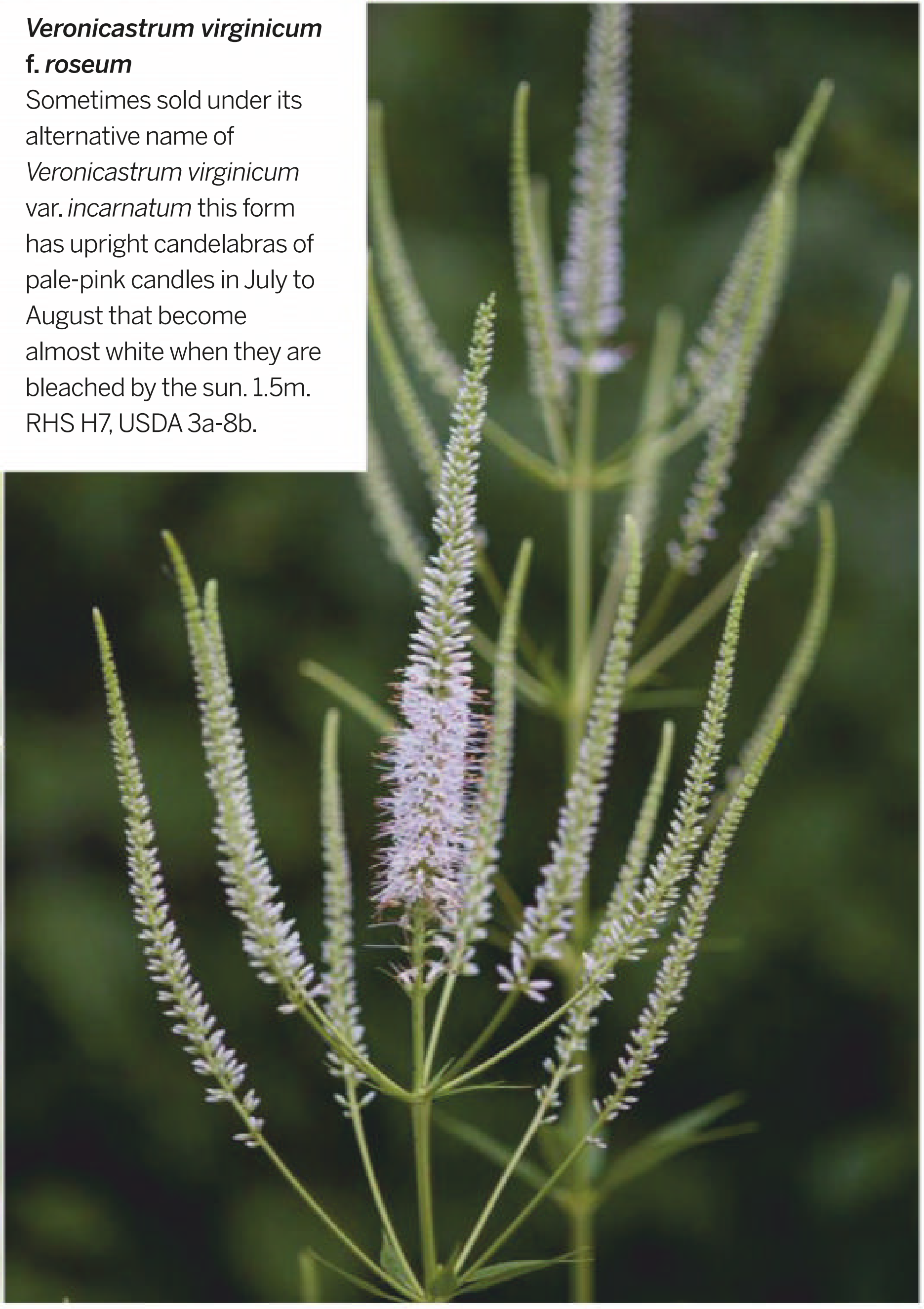
***Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Album'**
One of the latest veronicastrums to flower in July and August with robust upright stems and compact prolific flower spikes. Despite its name, the flowers on the slender spires are not pure white, but a very pale-pinkish white. 1.7m. AGM.



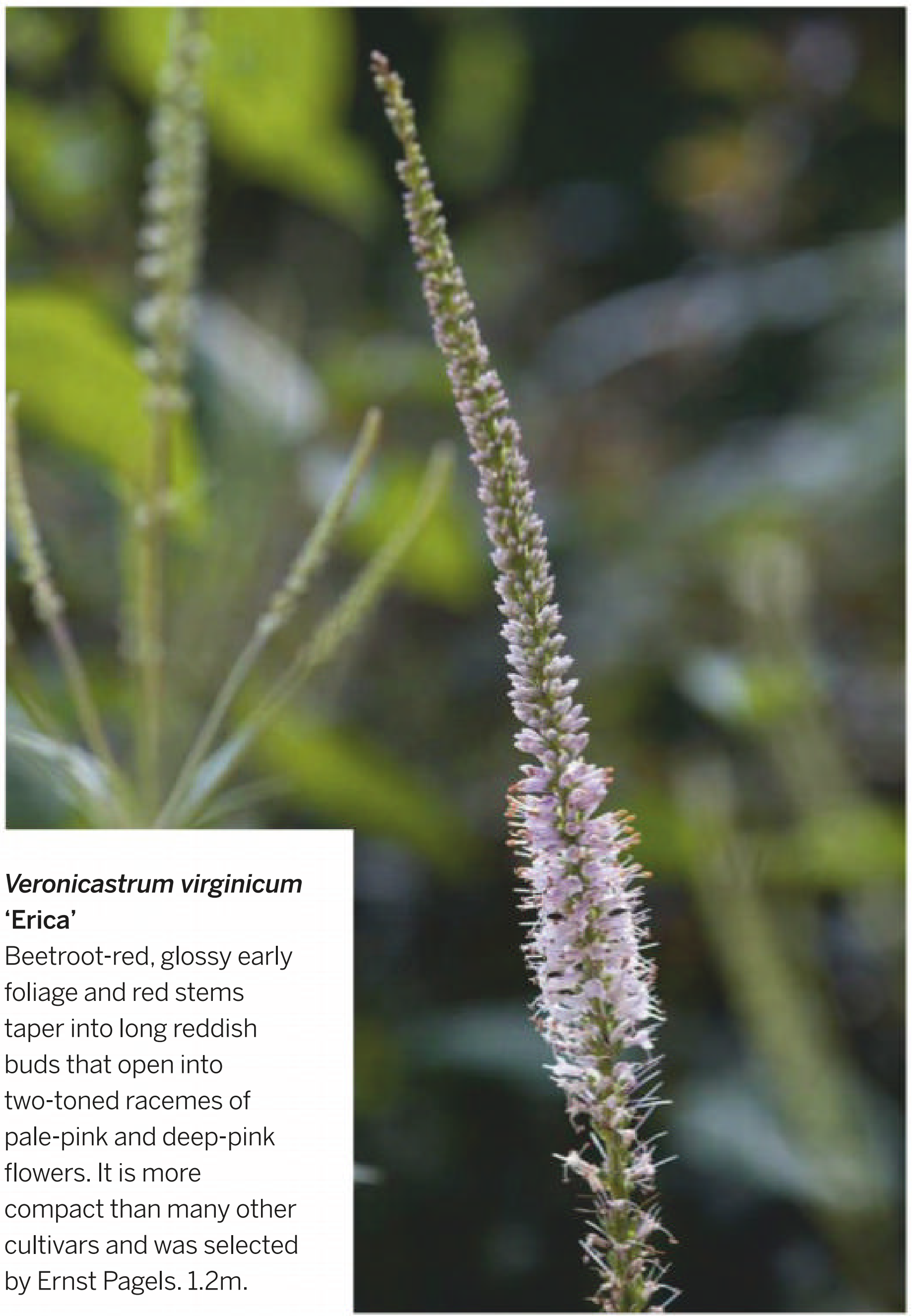
***Veronicastrum* 'Adoration'**
A recent pink-flowered selection from the Dutch designer Piet Oudolf with striking reddish-brown stems, self-supporting and multi-branched. A graceful and beautiful plant. For a more salmon pink colour, look out for Piet's latest selection *V. virginicum* 'Challenger'. 1.6m.



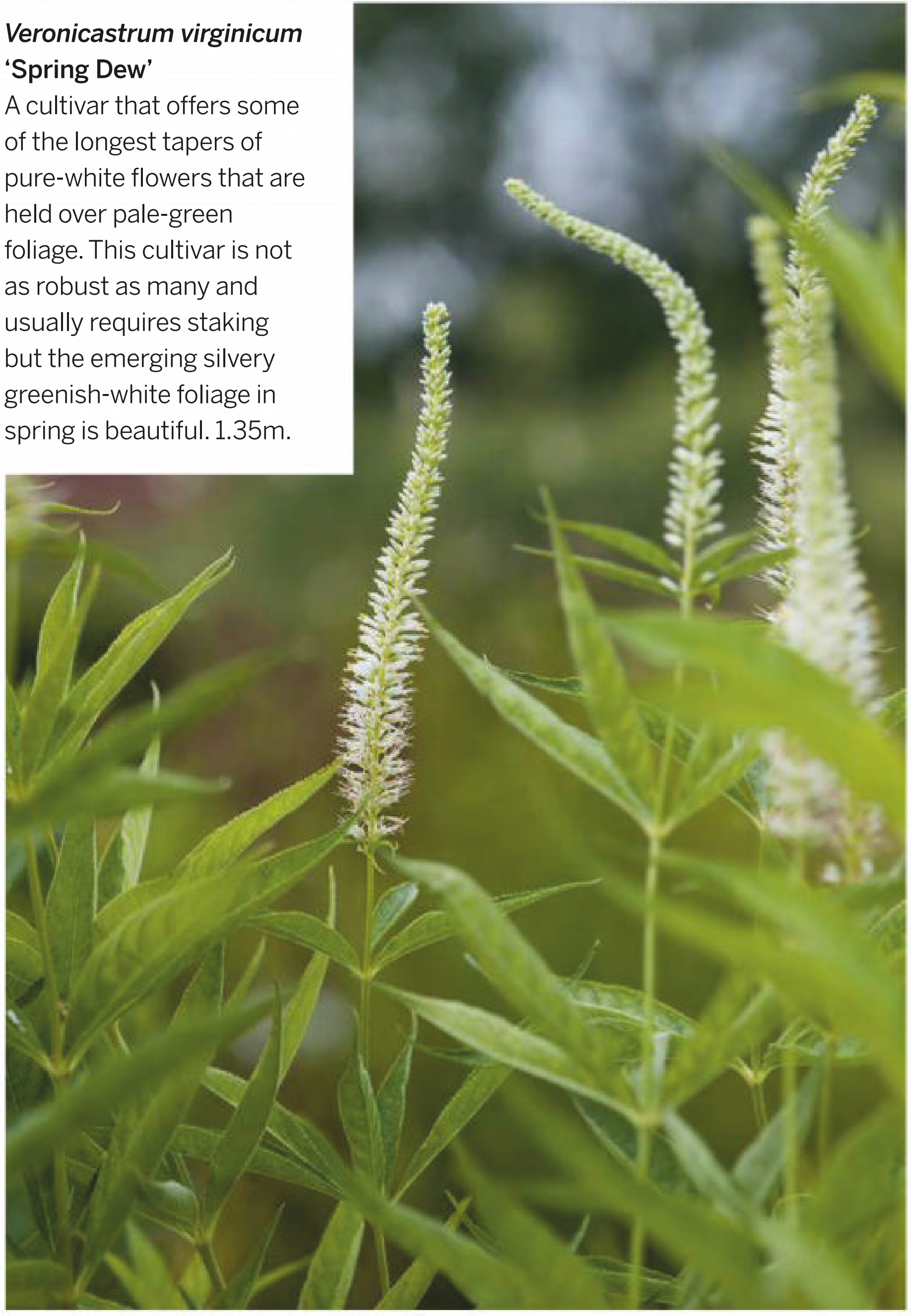
***Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Pointed Finger'**
With its long racemes of pale-blue flowers that lean out to the horizontal, pointing in the same direction, this distinctive cultivar is one that is perhaps better described as quirky rather than beautiful. Certainly distinctive. 1.5m.



Veronicastrum virginicum* f. *roseum
Sometimes sold under its alternative name of *Veronicastrum virginicum* var. *incarnatum* this form has upright candelabras of pale-pink candles in July to August that become almost white when they are bleached by the sun. 1.5m. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.



***Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Erica'**
Beetroot-red, glossy early foliage and red stems taper into long reddish buds that open into two-toned racemes of pale-pink and deep-pink flowers. It is more compact than many other cultivars and was selected by Ernst Pagels. 1.2m.



***Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Spring Dew'**
A cultivar that offers some of the longest tapers of pure-white flowers that are held over pale-green foliage. This cultivar is not as robust as many and usually requires staking but the emerging silvery greenish-white foliage in spring is beautiful. 1.35m.

Cultivation

As you'd expect from plants that hail from North America and Siberia veronicastrums are able to survive most cold winters. In the wild, they're found in a wide range of conditions from woodland, meadows, river banks and thickets, and can tolerate most soils although they grow best in sandy or loamy ground with sufficient moisture in sun or part shade. In dry seasons some wilting may occur on free-draining chalk or sandy soils but generally they need little attention after planting. On rich, moist soils they can grow to 2m or more with 60-75cm spread.

Along with foxgloves and toadflax, veronicastrums are part of the Plantaginaceae family, which are all prone to fasciation. You can remove fasciated flower spikes by pinching out the tip of the plants in mid-May to develop side shoots that have not been affected. It does mean foregoing the first vertical flower spike but there will be a profusion of subsidiary ones, although the overall height will be reduced. Judicious manipulation of plants during their growth cycle can increase flower power.

Veronicastrums are free from most pests and diseases although black leaf spot can occur on the lower leaves of some cultivars in dry seasons. Very occasionally, in extreme dry conditions, there is a hint of downy mildew especially on the taller members of this group,such as *V. virginicum* 'Lavendelturm' and *V. virginicum* 'Fascination'. Root rot may occur in wet or poorly drained soils. Rabbits and deer are not supposed to attack veronicastrums but I have found to my cost that not all rabbits and deer seem to be aware of this fact.

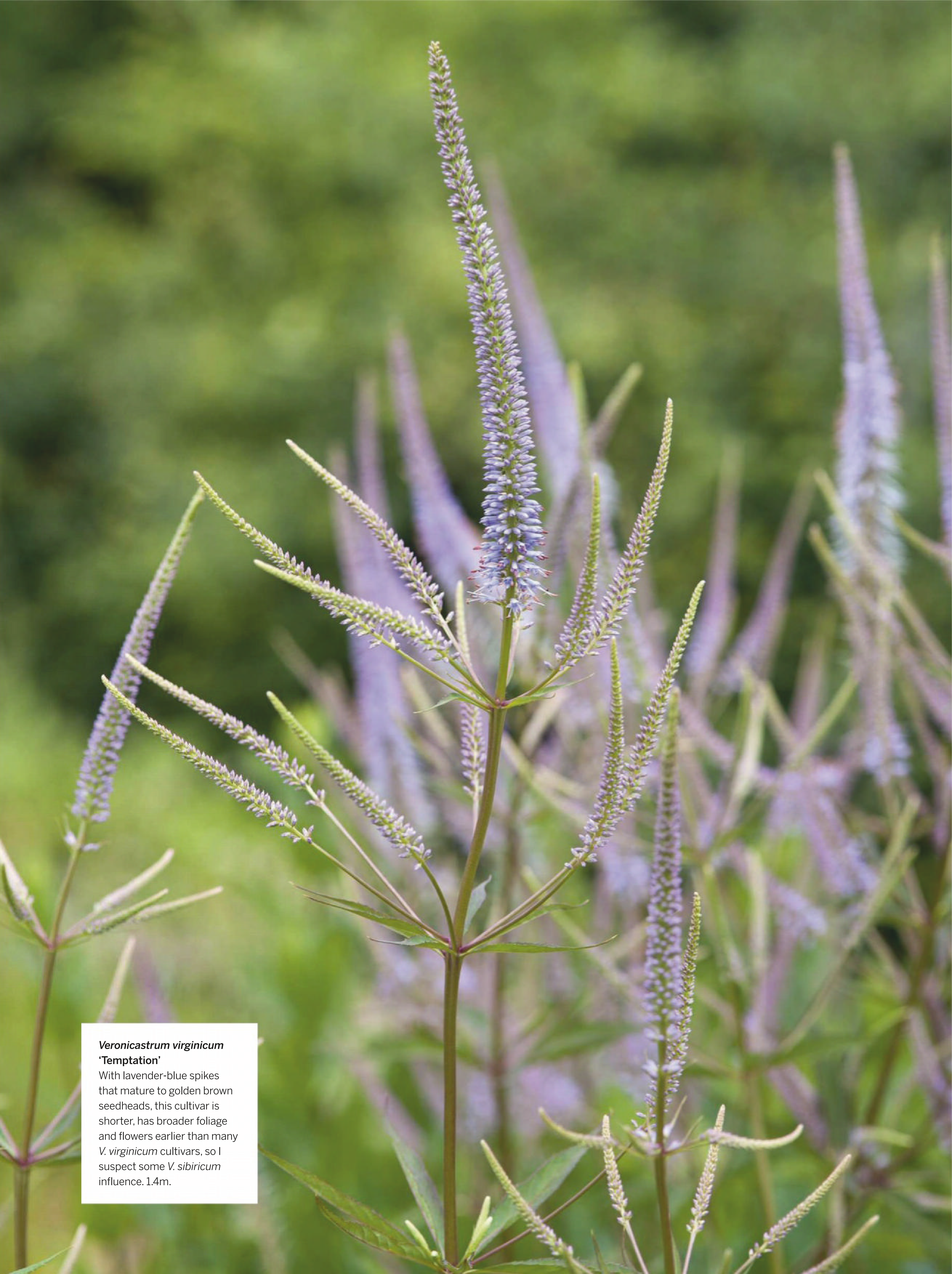
These clump-forming perennials increase slowly, gradually expanding in girth without dying out in the centre so you can leave them for many years before needing to divide them. They have a main taproot with small, slender, almost cylindrical, brown rhizomes that mature to black, hence their common name of black root. New plants can be grown from division, cuttings and in the case of species, from seed. I have found that root cuttings are also possible.

Veronicastrums are prairie plants and combine well with many tall grasses, such as *Panicum virgatum*, *Molinia caerulea* and *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora*. Perennials, including rudbeckias, salvias, nepetas, monardas and phlox are good companions and veronicastrums are robust enough to cope with some of the thugs of the prairies, such as *Eupatorium*, *Silphium* and *Helianthus*, although they can be slightly overwhelmed by much stronger growing grasses, such as *Miscanthus sinensis*. At the end of the season the old flower stalks can be cut to ground level and growth will resume in the spring.

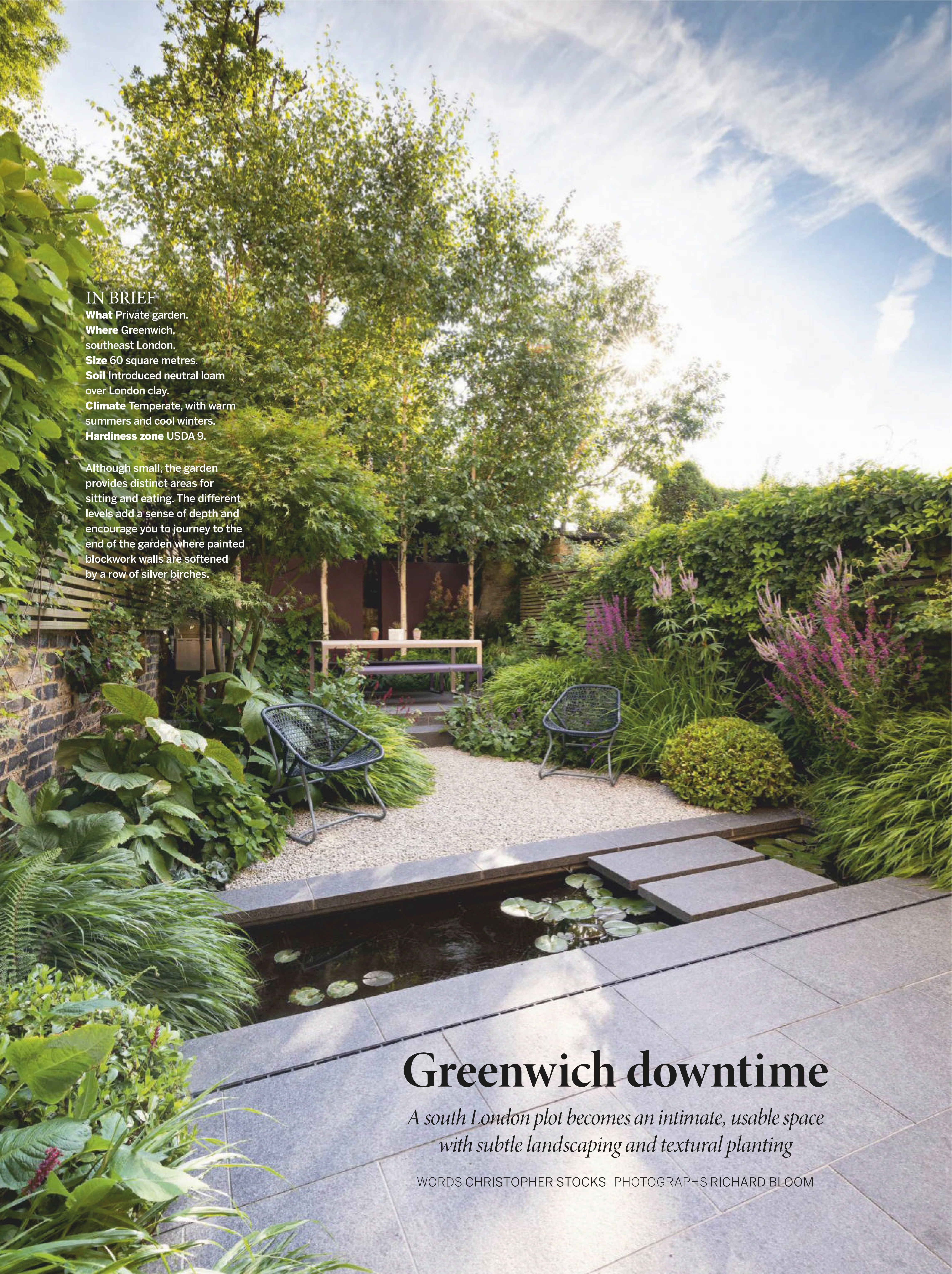
Where to see and buy

- **Dove Cottage**
  Shibden Hall Road, Halifax,
  West Yorkshire HX3 9XA.
  Tel 01422 203553,
  dovecottagenursery.co.uk
- **Macplants**
  Berrybank Nursery,
  5 Boggs Holdings,
  Pencaitland, East
  Lothian EH34 5BA.
  Tel 01875 341179,
  macplants.co.uk
- **Marchants Hardy Plants**
  2 Marchants Cottages, Mill
  Lane, Laughton, East
  Sussex BN8 6AJ.
  Tel 01323 811737,
  marchantshardyplants.co.uk
- **Phoenix Perennial Plants**
  Tel 01420 560695.
  The nursery is not open to
  public but you can find
  Marina at plant fairs
  around the country.
- **The Plant Specialist**
  7 Whitefield Lane,
  Great Missenden,
  Buckinghamshire HP16 0BH.
  Tel 01494 866650,
  theplantspecialist.co.uk

MANY THANKS TO THE PLANT SPECIALIST IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE WHERE THESE IMAGES WERE TAKEN.



Veronicastrum virginicum **'Temptation'**
With lavender-blue spikes that mature to golden brown seedheads, this cultivar is shorter, has broader foliage and flowers earlier than many *V. virginicum* cultivars, so I suspect some *V. sibiricum* influence. 1.4m.



Greenwich downtime

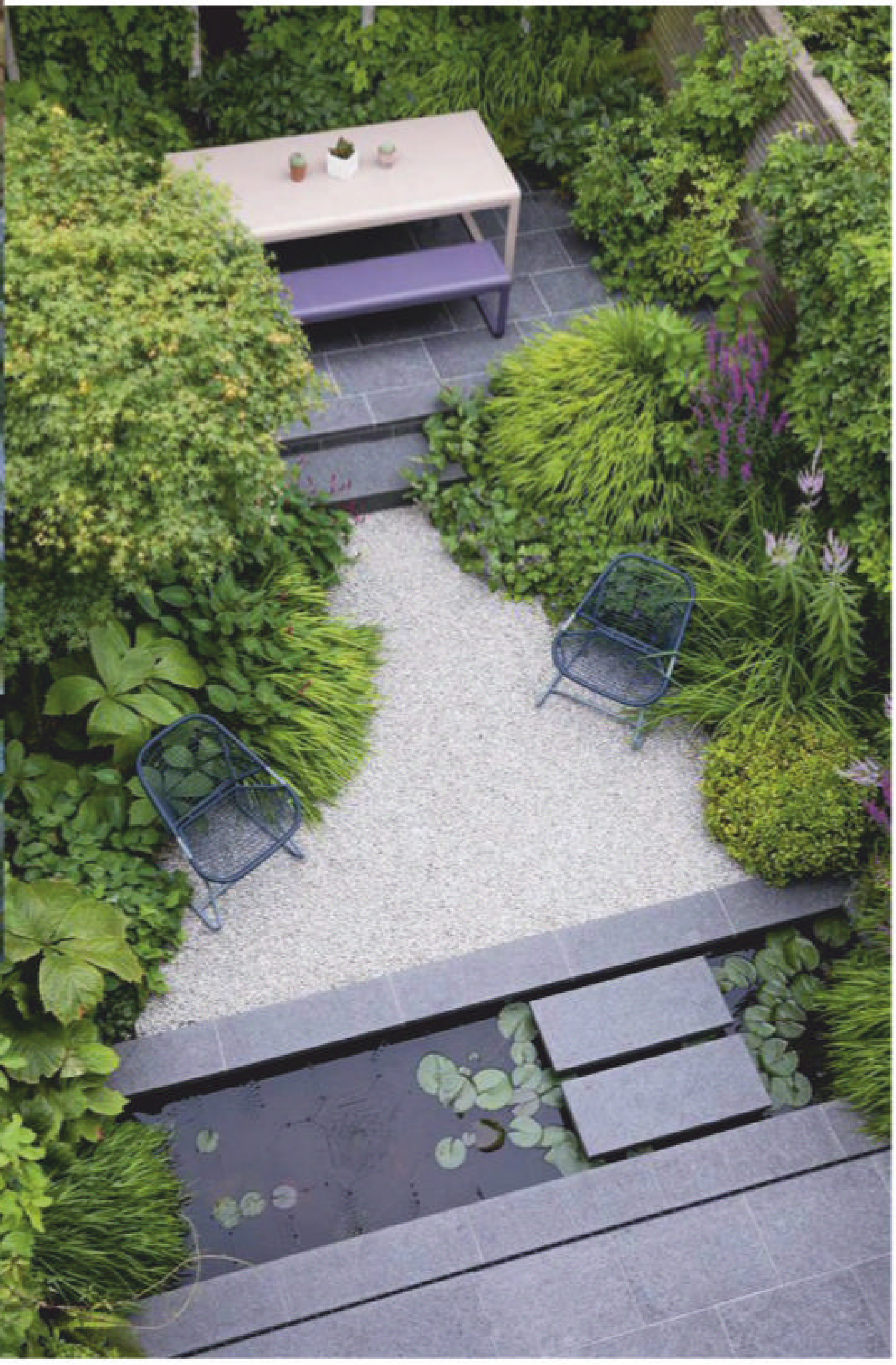
A south London plot becomes an intimate, usable space with subtle landscaping and textural planting

WORDS CHRISTOPHER STOCKS PHOTOGRAPHS RICHARD BLOOM

IN BRIEF

What Private garden.
Where Greenwich, southeast London.
Size 60 square metres.
Soil Introduced neutral loam over London clay.
Climate Temperate, with warm summers and cool winters.
Hardiness zone USDA 9.

Although small, the garden provides distinct areas for sitting and eating. The different levels add a sense of depth and encourage you to journey to the end of the garden where painted blockwork walls are softened by a row of silver birches.



Clockwise from top left

John uses ferns and grasses, such as *Hakonechloa macra* as a foil for large-leaved rodgersias.

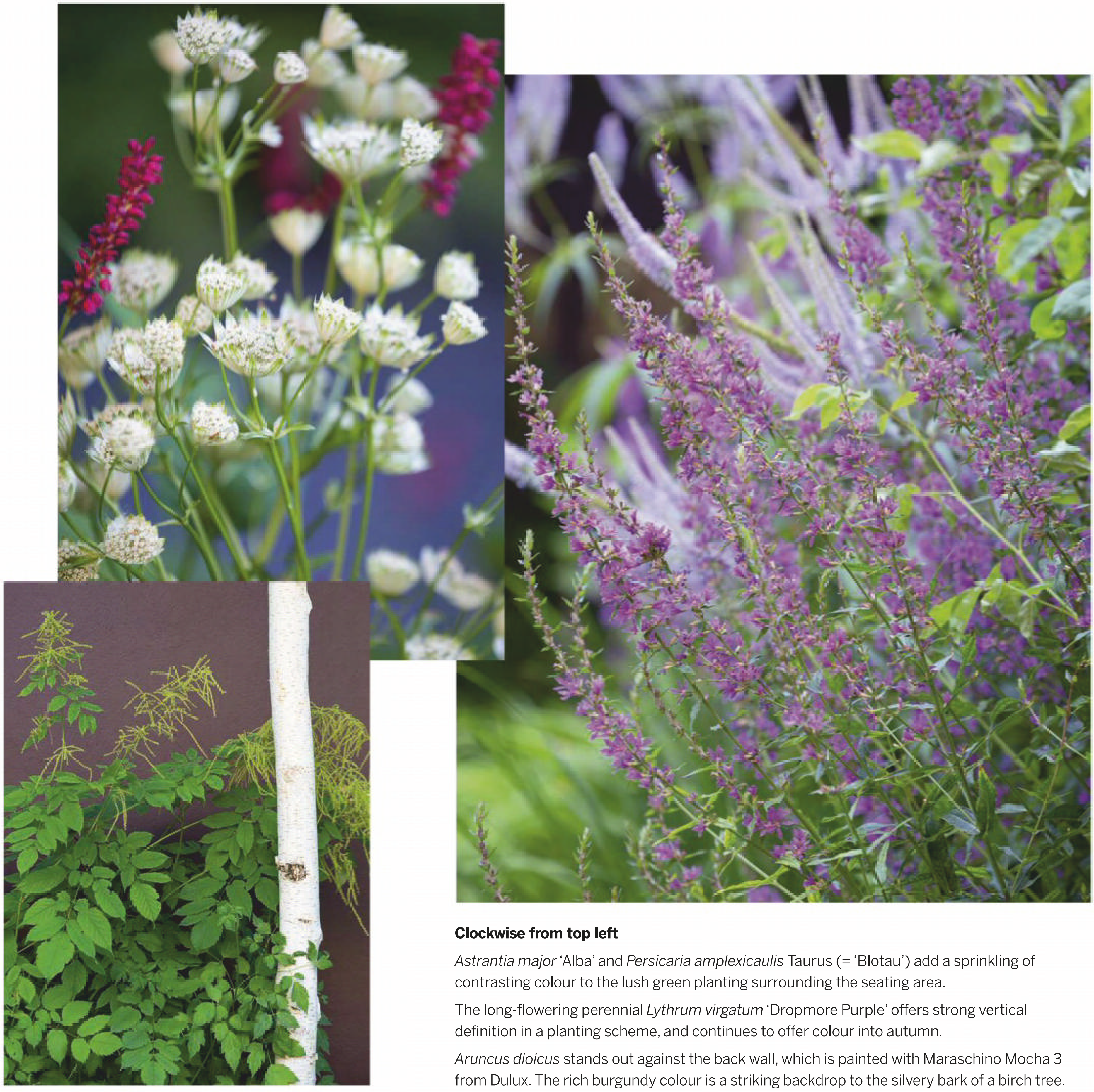
The waterlily *Nymphaea* 'Virginalis' grows in a rill dividing a terrace near the house from the rest of the garden. Beyond *Hakonechloa macra* and *Rodgersia aesculifolia* underplanted with *Epimedium* x *perralchicum* 'Fröhnleiten' wrap around the seating area with its Fermob chairs.

Grasses, such as *Hakonechloa macra*, offer a soft texture, among which the colour of *Lythrum virgatum* 'Dropmore Purple' stands out.

Five years ago designer John Davies was commissioned to design a small back garden for a husband and wife and their two young children. Behind their tall, narrow Georgian house in Greenwich, southeast London, the owners had inherited a plot with a steeply rising bank and supported by an old retaining wall. John's first idea was to use Corten steel to frame the garden and support the back wall, but that proved to be expensive. Instead, an elegant and effective solution was to install some slatted fencing and screen the back wall with two short runs of rendered blockwork, separated by a slit. Painted a rich, deep burgundy colour, the wall makes a striking backdrop to the row of silver birches at the end of the garden.

Although the owners didn't have a detailed brief, they did want to include a pond, and a rill became one of the keys to John's design. "I decided to build it across the full width of the plot with stepping stones across it to one side. This adds to the sense of a journey despite the garden's limited size," he explains. He located the dining area, and additional seating, at the far end of the garden for the same reason. "The most obvious solution might have been to place the entertaining and relaxation areas right by the house," he says, "but I wanted a reason to use all the space we had."

The design is intentionally asymmetrical, both in its hard landscaping and planting, which uses repeated elements – such as domes of *Pittosporum* – staggered across the garden to create diagonal sight-lines. "A lot ▷



Clockwise from top left

Astrantia major 'Alba' and *Persicaria amplexicaulis* Taurus (= 'Blotau') add a sprinkling of contrasting colour to the lush green planting surrounding the seating area.

The long-flowering perennial *Lythrum virgatum* 'Dropmore Purple' offers strong vertical definition in a planting scheme, and continues to offer colour into autumn.

Aruncus dioicus stands out against the back wall, which is painted with Maraschino Mocha 3 from Dulux. The rich burgundy colour is a striking backdrop to the silvery bark of a birch tree.

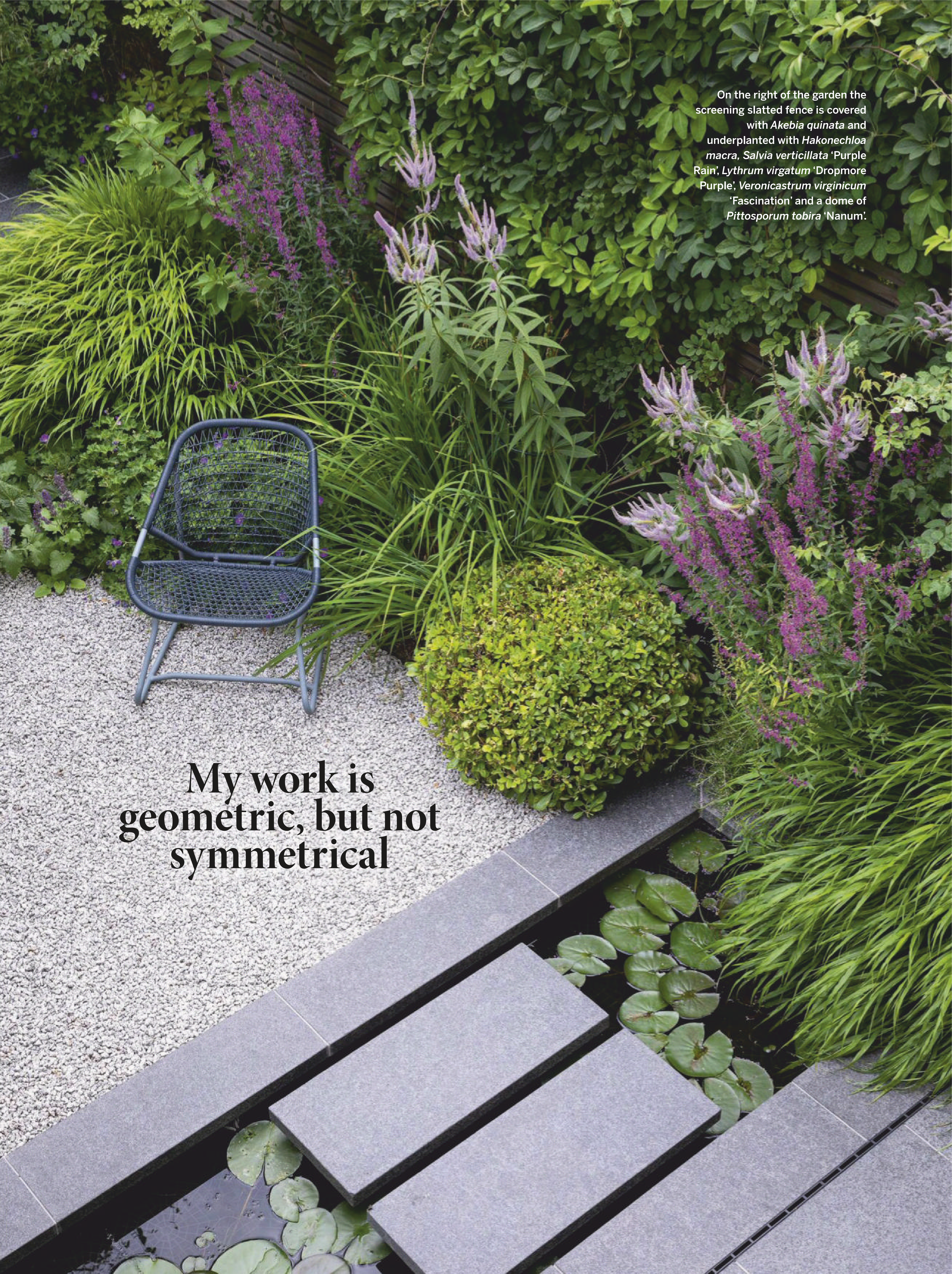
▷ of my work is geometric, but not symmetrical," he explains. "Asymmetry gives you a more generous space to play with, rather than two half spaces, and it's much more dynamic." Most of the plants have been selected for texture rather than colour, though spires of *Lythrum virgatum* 'Dropmore Purple' and *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Fascination' add violet and purple from midsummer onwards. "I love the translucency of grasses such as *Hakonechloa macra*, which make a great foil for more solid plants like the large-leaved rodgersias underplanted with epimediums," says John.

This isn't a plantsman's garden. As John points out, "a lot of clients aren't plants people, and that also goes for many designers. It doesn't matter how well you design your hard landscaping if you then choose the wrong plants, as this will only make the space look flat."

The garden does include one or two more unusual things, including an *Akebia* that has romped away along the fence and, near the back, *Kirengeshoma palmata*, a herbaceous woodlander from China and Japan that has sycamore-like leaves and waxy, yellow flowers in late summer. "I love plants," John says, and that's self-evident when you see how he has filled this tiny back garden with interest, as well as overcoming challenges in a simple yet considered way. □

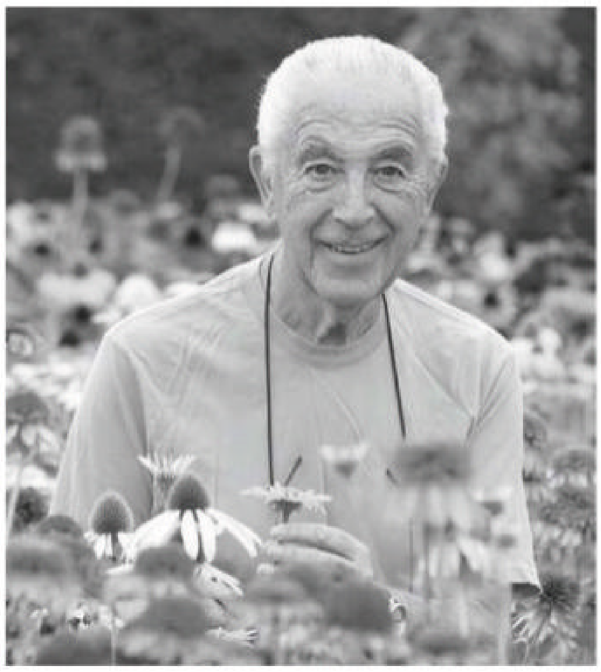
USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about John's work at **johndavieslandscape.co.uk**



On the right of the garden the screening slatted fence is covered with *Akebia quinata* and underplanted with *Hakonechloa macra, Salvia verticillata* 'Purple Rain', *Lythrum virgatum* 'Dropmore Purple', *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Fascination' and a dome of *Pittosporum tobira* 'Nanum'.

My work is geometric, but not symmetrical



Ask a child to draw a flower and what they produce will most likely be a circle surrounded by radiating petals. This simple, elegant shape is the first that most of us learn to recognise as the quintessential flower. Perhaps this deep familiarity explains the popularity of all daisy-shaped flowers – asters, leucanthemums, osteospermums, rudbeckias and, most recently, echinaceas.

Until 2004 echinaceas, or coneflowers as they are known, were mainly available in shades of dusky pink or dirty white. And then the Chicago Botanic Garden introduced *Echinacea* 'Art's Pride'. "It caused a sensation," says nurseryman Rob Cole. "Its bright-orange flowers were dazzling." The plant kindled an interest that became a passion and would see him growing thousands of them at his Worcestershire nursery. The commercial success of the plant also led to plant breeders introducing dozens of new hybrids, in bright colours and sometimes with unusual flower shapes, micropropagated in large numbers to meet the escalating demand.

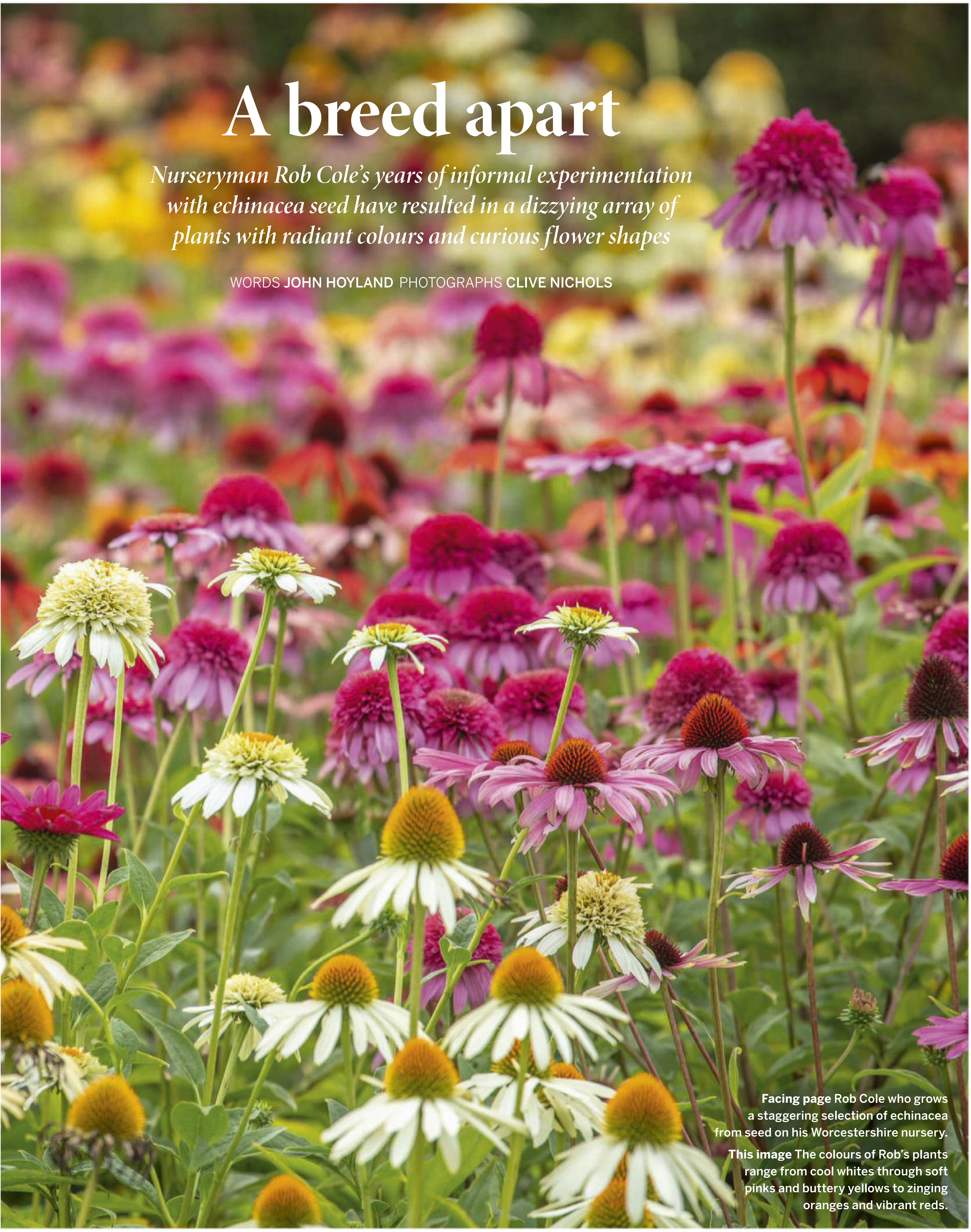
But there was a problem with 'Art's Pride' and with many of the later introductions. "At the time, the press releases all described it as a vigorous plant, but this was not the case and almost everyone who bought it lost it after a year," recalls Rob. *Echinacea purpurea*, one of the parents of 'Arts Pride', is relatively short-lived for a perennial, living five to ten years, but many of the new hybrids lasted only one or two years. As a consequence, the genus developed a difficult reputation: beautiful but expensive plants, here today, gone tomorrow.

'Art's Pride' was also said to be sterile, but Rob noticed that his plants had seed, so he collected them and sowed them. "I've always enjoyed growing from seed and I still love seeing seedlings emerge." The seed he sowed in 2005 resulted in a staggering 88 plants, some with bright-red flowers, others with ▷

A breed apart

Nurseryman Rob Cole's years of informal experimentation with echinacea seed have resulted in a dizzying array of plants with radiant colours and curious flower shapes

WORDS **JOHN HOYLAND** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLIVE NICHOLS**



Facing page Rob Cole who grows a staggering selection of echinacea from seed on his Worcestershire nursery.

This image The colours of Rob's plants range from cool whites through soft pinks and buttery yellows to zinging oranges and vibrant reds.

I AM ALWAYS IMPATIENT TO GET OUT TO SEE WHAT FLOWERS HAVE OPENED, TO SEE WHAT NEW BEAUTY WE HAVE

▷ pale-orange ones. He kept his favourites and collected seed from them, and so began an annual process that has produced more than 13,000 seedlings, with several hundred kept to sell at plant fairs and as a source of seed for the next generation of plants. "I don't do any hybridising," he says. "The bees do all the work. I just sow the seeds and wait to see what comes up."

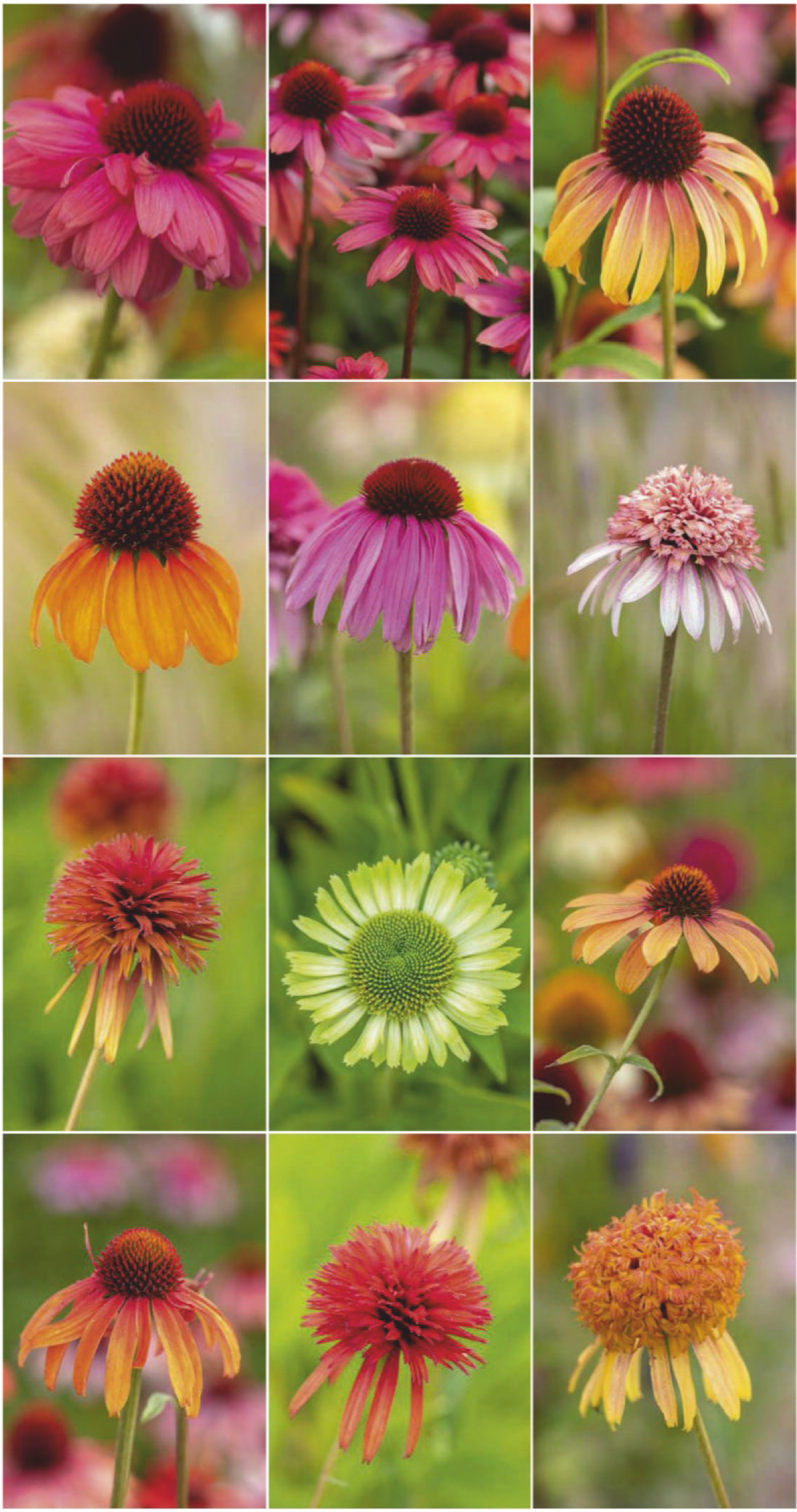
The colours of the flowers of Rob's plants encompass buttery creams, acid yellows, cool whites, vibrant reds and zinging oranges. His seedlings have also thrown up plants with several layers of ray florets that give the impression of a double flower and others where the central cone is transformed into a pompom of tightly packed petals. In 2012 Rob planted out 100 of his favourite plants in a trial bed. Sixty survived for five years and some are still going strong. "Some really lovely flowers have popped up and the ones I don't like go on the compost," says Rob. Growing plants from seed is easy and yields results quickly. It can also be exciting. "Every morning in July and August I am always impatient to get out to see what flowers have opened, to see what new beauty we have."

Following Rob's example is, perhaps, the solution to having these beautiful flowers without continually needing to buy expensive new plants. You won't have the latest, heavily marketed, hybrid, but you will get a range of colourful plants, often with intriguing flowerheads. More than that, though, you will get immense pleasure from nurturing a new plant and the thrill of seeing what appears. Rob is about to retire as a nurseryman, but he will still continue collecting and sowing echinacea seeds.

"I am not doing this for commercial gain or to breed a new plant. My intention was to find a good range of colours and plants that would stand up to the British climate," says Rob. "I am doing this because it is fascinating and for the pleasure of seeing the results." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Rob's garden is open to groups of 20 or more by appointment. meadowfarm33.co.uk



HOW TO PRODUCE ECHINACEA FROM SEED

Most of Rob's plants are unnamed, chance seedlings. Part of the joy of growing from seed is that you never know what shape and colour will result.

Collecting the seed. Wait until the central cone of the flower has dried, usually in early autumn – the cone should be entirely black, with no green or bronze centre. Hold a paper bag around the cone to catch falling seeds and snip off the seedhead. Do this on a dry day so that the seed is not damp.

Bring the seedheads indoors and pull them apart on a sheet of white paper (which helps to distinguish the seeds from the chaff). As you clear away the debris, you will see the white seed capsules.

Not all seed capsules will contain viable seed. If the capsule feels solid when you press on it with your thumbnail, it contains a seed; if it collapses, there is no seed. If you are collecting from different plants, keep the seeds separate and store them in an envelope or paper bag with a description of the flower written on it. Keep the seeds dry and cool until you are ready to sow.

Sowing the seed. Sow the seed as soon as you can, preferably by mid-December. Seed can be sown into seed trays or 9cm pots using a seed-sowing compost. Fill the container with compost to within 1cm of the top, tap down gently, scatter the seed on top and cover with a fine layer of compost, preferably through a sieve. Cover this with a layer of horticultural grit to discourage weeds and stop the seeds being washed away by rain or overly enthusiastic watering. Put a label in the pot with a description of the flower written on it.

Germinating and growing on. Leave the pots outdoors until the following spring. When the seedlings have germinated, prick them out into separate 7cm or 9cm pots and grow them on either in an unheated greenhouse, in a cold frame or on a windowsill. In May, plant out the young plants into the garden or into larger pots – two- or three-litre is ideal. In the garden, echinaceas need a fertile, free-draining soil in a spot that is sunny for at least half of the day. They prefer an open situation that is not crowded by other plants.

About half of your plants will flower later in the summer. If you have a particular favourite, mark it with a plant label and collect the seed from it when it ripens in the autumn.

Left Just some of the many different colours and shapes found among Rob's unnamed seedlings.

HORTICULTURAL WHO'S WHO

STEPHEN BLACKMORE

The renowned horticulturist and chairman of Botanic Gardens Conservation International, on the threats of climate change and the importance of letting children run wild

WORDS LIA LEENDERTZ PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

Stephen Blackmore has enough letters after his name (CBE, VHM, FRSE, FRSB) to let you know that he is something serious in the world of horticulture. The list of jobs he held before retirement is impressive to say the least – most recently Regius Keeper at Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh – and yet he wants to talk about curry mornings. If I was expecting high-handed minutiae about the rarest of plants, I'm not going to get it from him. "Of course I am hugely concerned about rare plants and plant conservation, but there is no choice to be made between that and community involvement. They are the same thing. The future of plant conservation depends upon people being engaged." And so he talks animatedly about the increase in volunteering at botanic gardens, about community tree planting schemes using conservation-grade trees, and about that curry morning, which takes place at the Botanic Cottage at RBGE once a week, providing a space for women from the Bangladeshi community to come together and cook produce from the garden and eat and talk. "I have a great belief in the power of botanic gardens to do good," he says, "and this is the sort of place that it starts."

> THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN SO MUCH TO BE FOUGHT FOR

He is particularly excited about a wonderful interactive children's playground at Moreton Arboretum in Chicago where the children can build dams and stomp in streams. "Kids need to run wild if they're going to have a stake in the natural world," he says, and his own experience backs this up. His childhood home in Staffordshire backed on to fields and he had that once so common – now so rare – experience of being sent out to play every day with his brothers and sister. It was where he developed the love of nature that saw him go on take such an active role in plant conservation.

After a degree and PhD in Botany at the University of Reading, he went on to jobs in botanic gardens in Malawi and the Seychelles, then later at the Natural History Museum and RBGE. Having spent most of his working life in botanic gardens, since his retirement in 2013 Stephen has been chairman of Botanic Gardens Conservation International, which acts as a network for botanic gardens around the world. "Our aim is to develop collective thinking across botanic gardens, to look at what the issues are and how we can face them.

"So many of the world's problems can be solved at a horticultural level. They are problems that require good horticultural skills – replenishing soils, restocking degraded ecosystems – and the botanic gardens are continually developing and nurturing these skills, as well as actively going out and solving problems." He cites the case of the Mulanje cedar *Widdringtonia whytei*, endemic to Malawi and its national tree, but formerly in danger of going extinct because it is such a high-value timber tree. Now with money from the Darwin Initiative and a team from Malawi's Forestry Research Institute, nurseries have been created in local villages and villagers are paid for every tree they plant, rather than illegally making money from cutting them down.

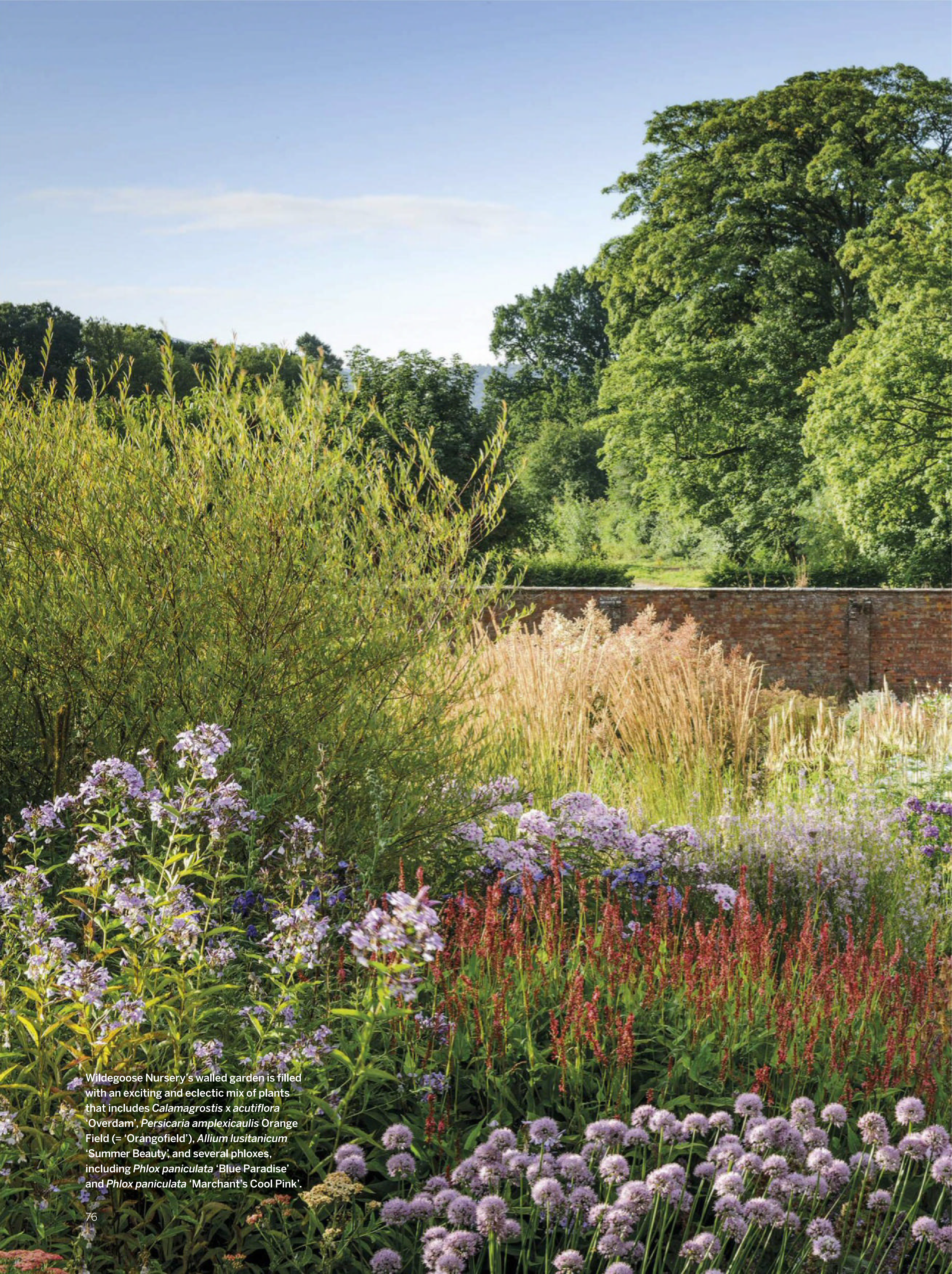
He is of course fully aware of the ever more alarming threats to the natural world, but finds it easy to stay optimistic about the future. "Recent climate change research has identified that we have a window of ten to 12 years to turn things around before irrevocable and disastrous climate change. That's hugely alarming, yes, but what this also means is that this is the most important time in human history. There has never been so much to be fought for."

He is continually among those fighting the good fight of course, and he also sees botanists and the botanic gardens as having a particular role here: that of keeping the flame burning while people wake up to the dangers. "We recently introduced a 'zero extinction policy', and this means recognising that we have the skills, the seed banks and the botanic gardens to keep any plant going. There is no reason why any species has to go extinct." This idea as a statement of intent has been spreading around the botanic gardens of the globe, and Stephen has seen many situations where the political will has finally, latterly swung towards conservation, and the botanists have been there with the plants and the skills to come in and re-establish lost habitats. Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden in south Yunnan is in an area that has been decimated by rubber tree plantations. Its own zero extinction policy has now been adopted by the local government, and large-scale funding programmes are in place to plant forests of indigenous trees. "China is usually associated with environmental destruction, but they are rapidly moving up, and here is a government committed to recovering its forests. Things are changing."

He looks forward to the challenge of applying his years of experience to future problems. "I've seen what can be achieved. Botanic gardens have a huge role to play in engaging the people that will turn things around. We need people to care and to find what they can do locally, and increasingly this is happening." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Descanso House,
199 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3BW.
Tel 020 8332 5953, bgci.org



Wildegoose Nursery's walled garden is filled with an exciting and eclectic mix of plants that includes *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Overdam', *Persicaria amplexicaulis* Orange Field (= 'Orangofield'), *Allium lusitanicum* 'Summer Beauty', and several phloxes, including *Phlox paniculata* 'Blue Paradise' and *Phlox paniculata* 'Marchant's Cool Pink'.

Natural selection

At Wildegoose Nursery in Shropshire Jack and Laura Willgoss specialise in growing choice hardy perennial plants

WORDS **ALYS FOWLER** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

Laura and Jack Willgoss's story stems from a dream that many of us have probably held at some point: to find an abandoned walled garden and restore it. It was a dream they had nurtured since meeting as horticultural students at RHS Garden Wisely, clutching at it as they worked on other people's gardens seven days a week, until one day it came true thanks to a strong wind blowing down a polytunnel.

In 2011 the pair acquired the Bouts perennial viola collection and started a nursery, not on a patch surrounded by beautiful brick walls but in a sloping field. The perfect site – an abandoned walled garden – lay just down the road, but despite numerous enquiries the gates remained firmly shut. So they soldiered on despite a regularly flooding field and hoped that one day they would get inside the walled garden. Their chance came when their polytunnels blew down and their neighbours politely enquired whether there wasn't a more suitable location elsewhere. They explained their predicament, and it turned out that the neighbours knew the owners of the walled garden. After putting in a good word, two acres and some crumbling greenhouses suddenly became a reality.

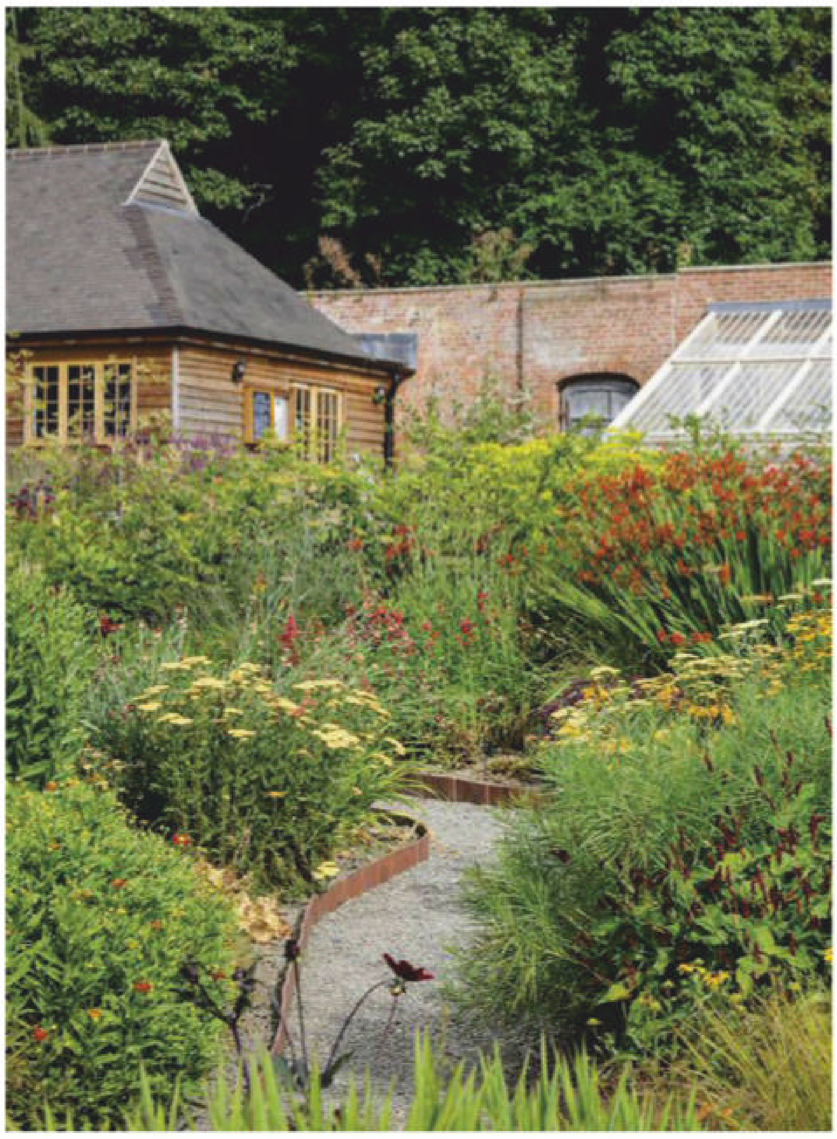
The walled garden, which is rented on a long-term lease, had not been cultivated in any traditional sense since the 1960s. Instead it had been a tree nursery, a fish farm and a holding pen for raising pheasants. When they moved in, the Georgian glasshouses were derelict. To pay for their restoration, they went back to jobbing gardening, applied for funding from the Lottery Heritage Fund and Country Houses Foundation that was matched by the owners, and started up a tea room.

The restoration was completed in 2016, but "it's still growing into the space we want," says Laura. "We've been talking to Sarah Wain [former gardens supervisor at West Dean Gardens in Sussex, another restored 19th-century walled garden] about what to do with the space and have decided on maximum impact for minimum effort, hence the tomatoes for now. The reality is that greenhouses can be very labour-intensive spaces with plants prone to pests and diseases. Traditionally, there would have been an army of Victorian gardeners to tend to them." Her ultimate aim is to have South African bulb and pelargonium collections in pots.

As for the rest of the garden, the couple were after a more contemporary planting style, and drew inspiration from their favourite nurseries, Dove Cottage in West Yorkshire and Marchants Hardy Plants in East Sussex. They wanted a little of the New Perennial Movement and Piet Oudolf's loose, naturalistic planting with a little of the colour of Sandra Pope's work at Hadspen in Somerset back in the early 2000s. They also travel to the continent each year looking for new perennials and rare finds. The business may be about selling choice plants, but the space is about creating a working environment they can both enjoy. "For years we worked for other people and never got to enjoy the garden at the end of the day. Here we wanted to create a place where we could do just that," says Jack. "Of course, we want visitors to buy the plants, but we also want the garden to be a genuinely restorative space." And this nursery is certainly more than the sum of its plants. Behind those majestic walls is the chance to contemplate a beautiful, evolving garden, have a cup of tea and take home a little inspiration. □

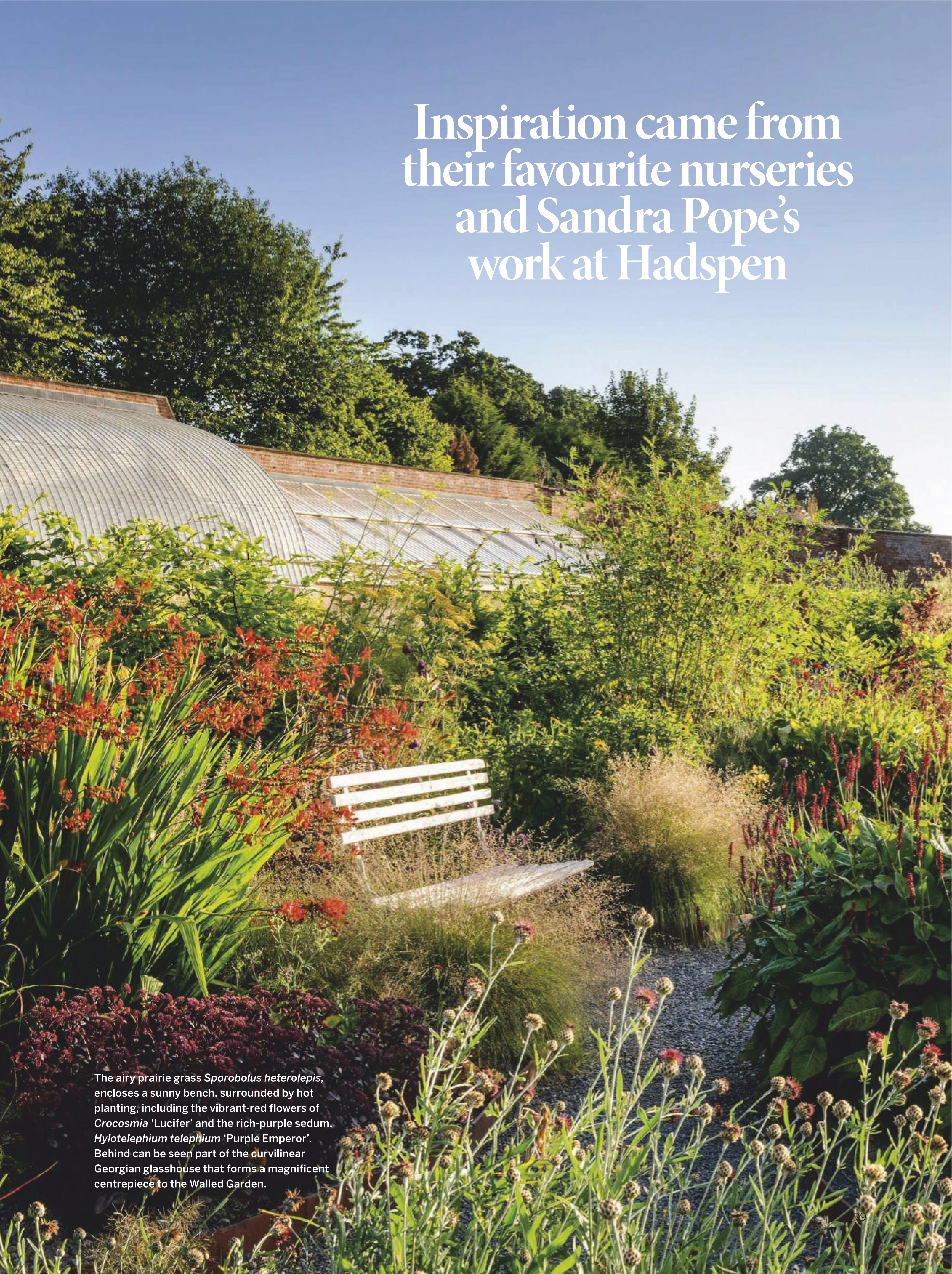
USEFUL INFORMATION
Address Lower Millichope, Munslow, Shropshire SY7 9HE.
Tel 01584 841890. **Website** wildegoosenursery.co.uk
Open Friday – Sunday, 10am-4.30pm, until 13 October.
See website for details of workshops.

Turn the page for 16 key plants.



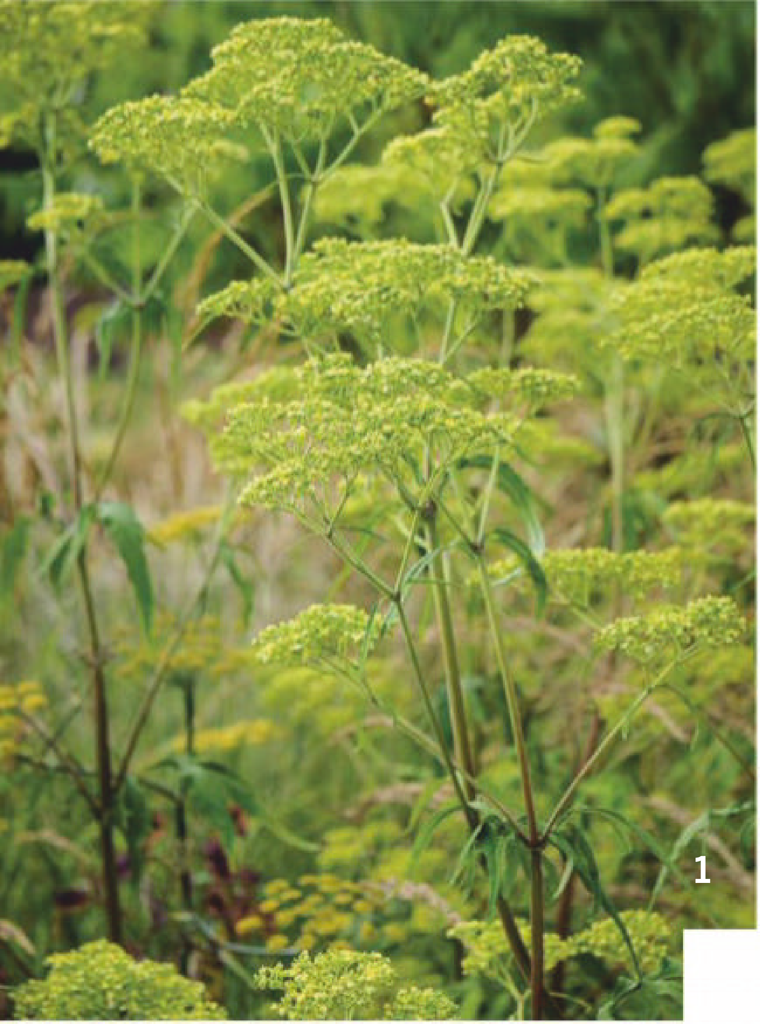
Above Jack and Laura Willgoss, in the walled garden. Behind them is part of the Georgian glasshouse the couple saved from dereliction, and in the foreground is the pretty *Phlox* x *arendsii* 'Utopia'.

Top A gravel path winds its way through a vibrant mix of planting that includes the cooler yellows of *Achillea* 'Forncett Fletton' and *Patrinia monandra*, the fiery reds of *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Firetail' and *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer', and the orange of several heleniums.



Inspiration came from their favourite nurseries and Sandra Pope's work at Hadspen

The airy prairie grass *Sporobolus heterolepis*, encloses a sunny bench, surrounded by hot planting, including the vibrant-red flowers of *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer' and the rich-purple sedum, *Hylotelephium telephium* 'Purple Emperor'. Behind can be seen part of the curvilinear Georgian glasshouse that forms a magnificent centrepiece to the Walled Garden.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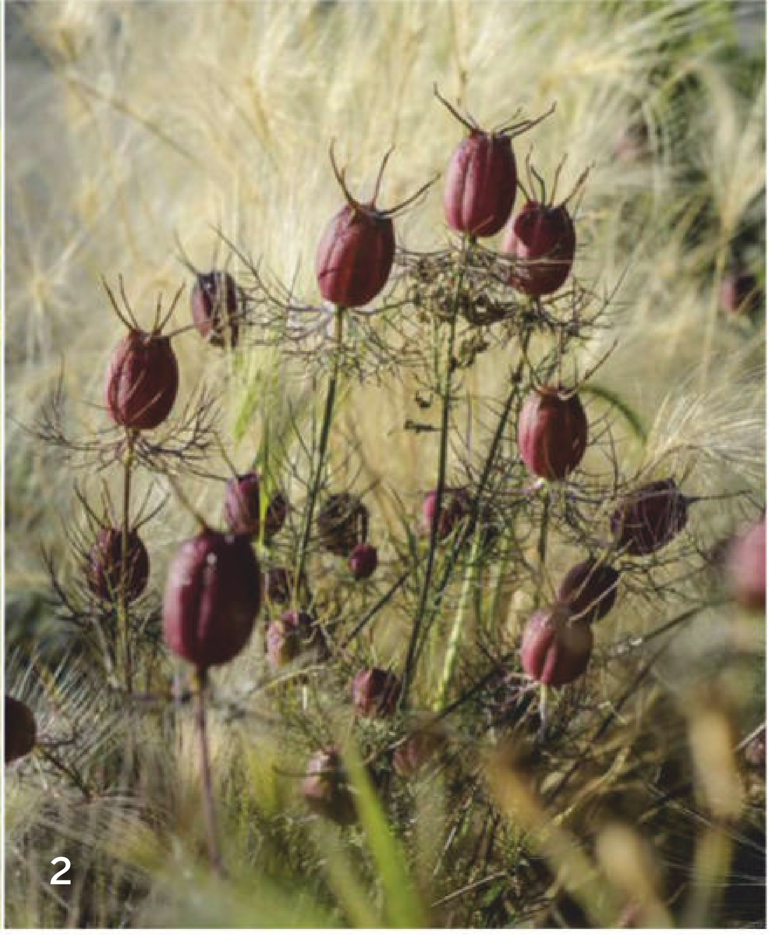
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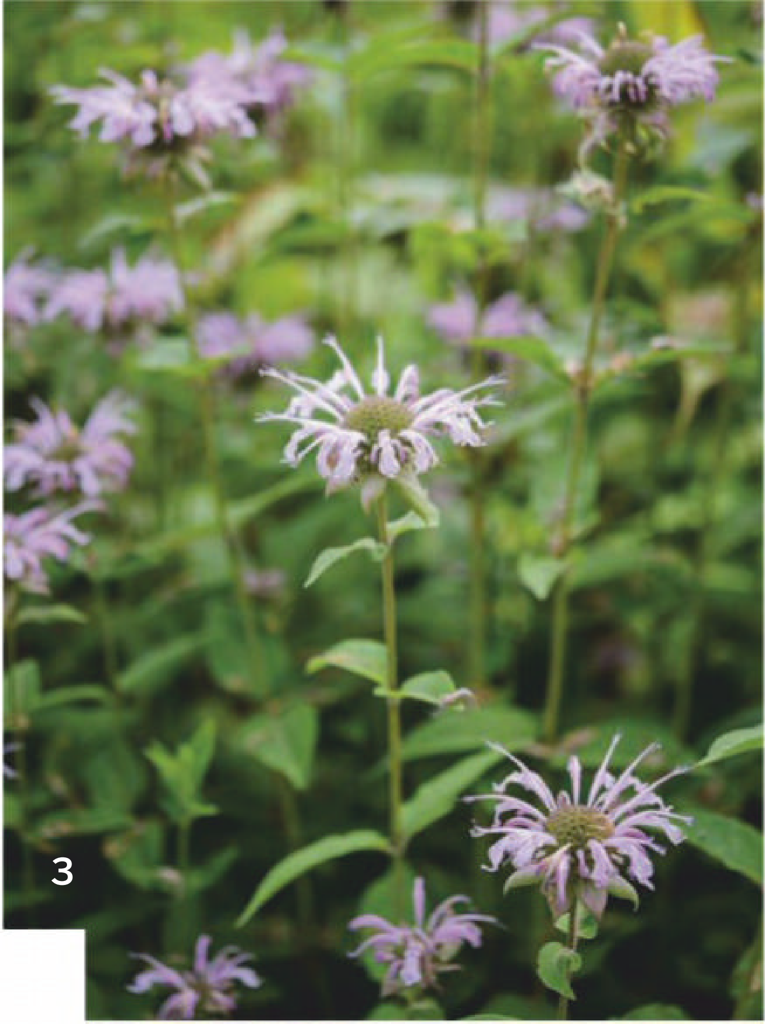
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16 KEY PLANTS

1 *Patrinia monandra*
Large rosettes of heavily branched flowerheads covered in tiny, yellow flowers, followed by handsome seedheads. Long season of interest from July to September. 1.2m.

2 *Nigella* 'Albion Black Pod'
Delicate, white flowers with curly stamens are followed by large, black, inflated seedpods. Wonderful autumn silhouette or cut flower. 45cm.

3 *Monarda* 'Camilla'
Lilac-rose, whorled blossom over purple-green bracts. Bred to be mildew-free; best in an open, sunny spot. 65-75cm.

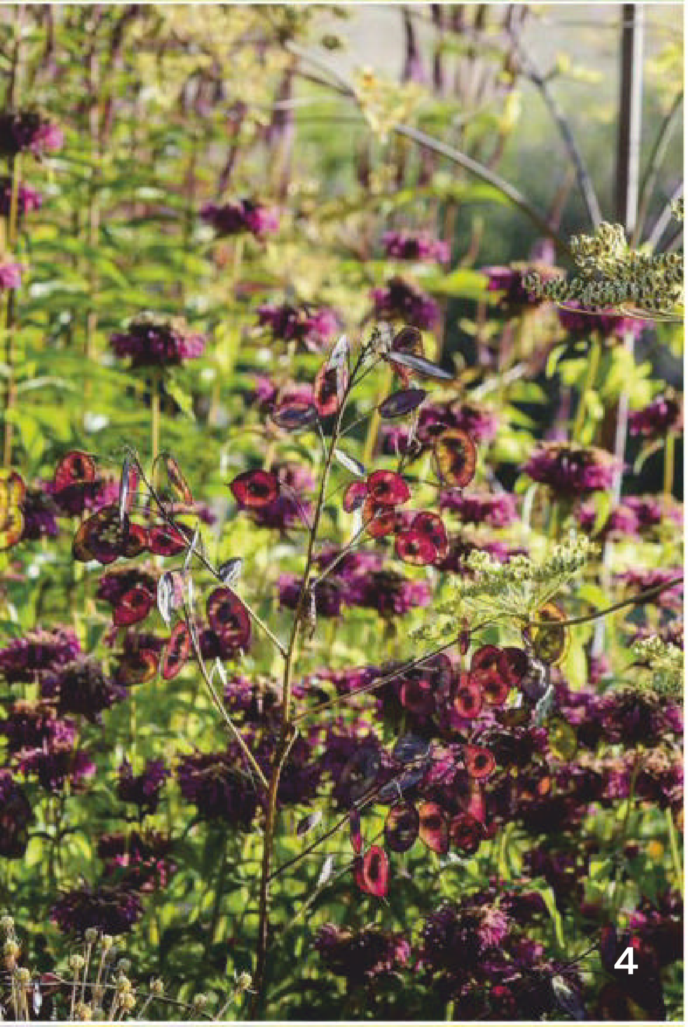
4 *Lunaria annua* 'Chedglow'
A delightful, dusky, chocolate-purple-leaved honesty cultivar with lilac flowers in late spring and, in late summer, classic, flat seedpods that fade to silver. Will happily self-seed. 1m. USDA 5a-9b†.

5 *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Willemijntje'
Makes a neat, tight plant with deep, lilac-pink flowers that are slightly reddish in bud. 1.3m. USDA 3a-8b.

6 *Bupleurum falcatum*
A lovely umbel, like a dwarf fennel, with acid-yellow flowers in June and July. A biennial that will self-seed prolifically. Half-hardy. 60cm.

7 *Allium lusitanicum* 'Summer Beauty'
This allium, with its dark-mauve drumsticks of flowers keeps to itself and won't self-seed. Its leaves remain flat and glossy and don't suddenly turn brown as it comes into flower. Drought-tolerant, and perfect for near the front of the border. 60cm. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

8 *Sanguisorba officinalis* 'Korean Phoenix'
Originally collected from a dry woodland in South Korea, this plant has delicate, wiry stems and foliage that stays very low so that the crimson flowers appear to float above the whole thing. 2m. USDA 4a-8b.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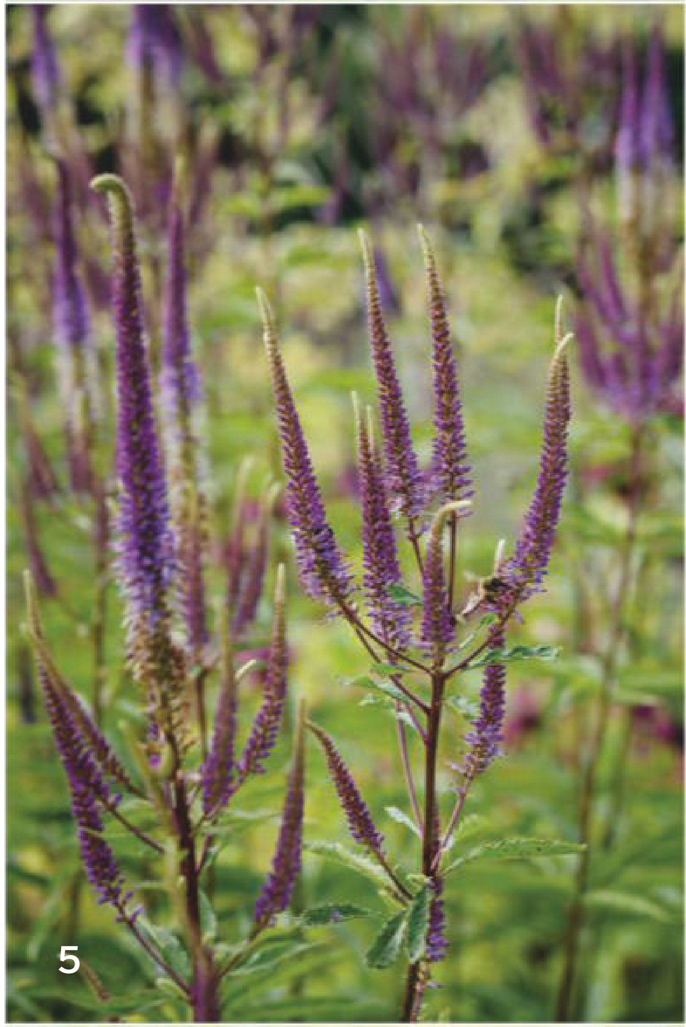
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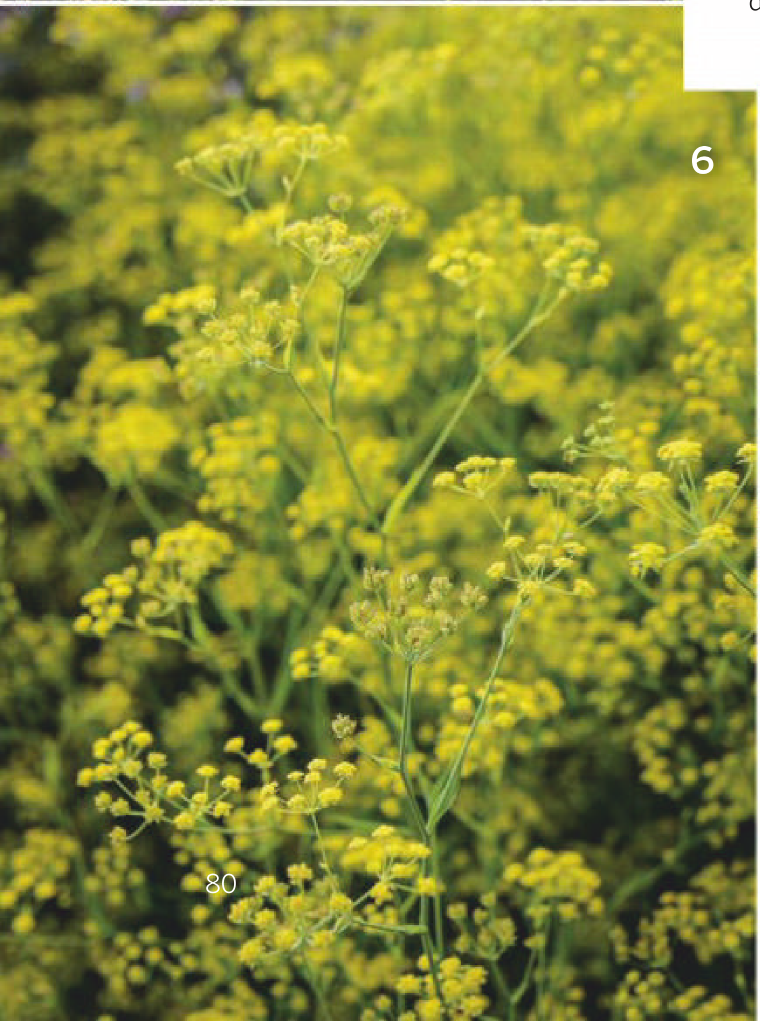
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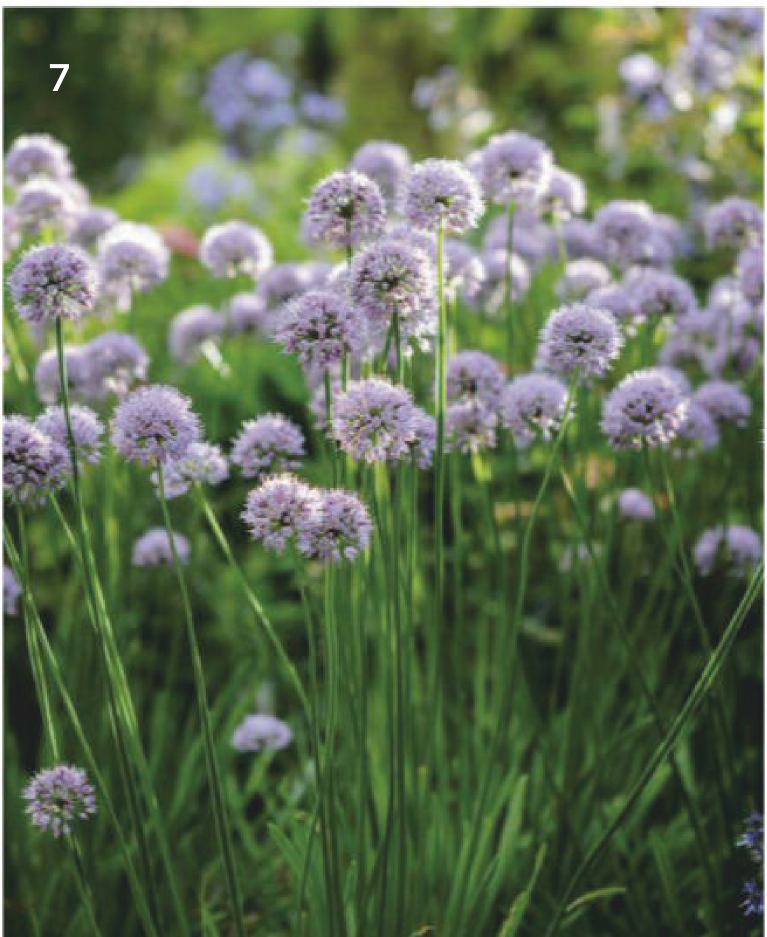
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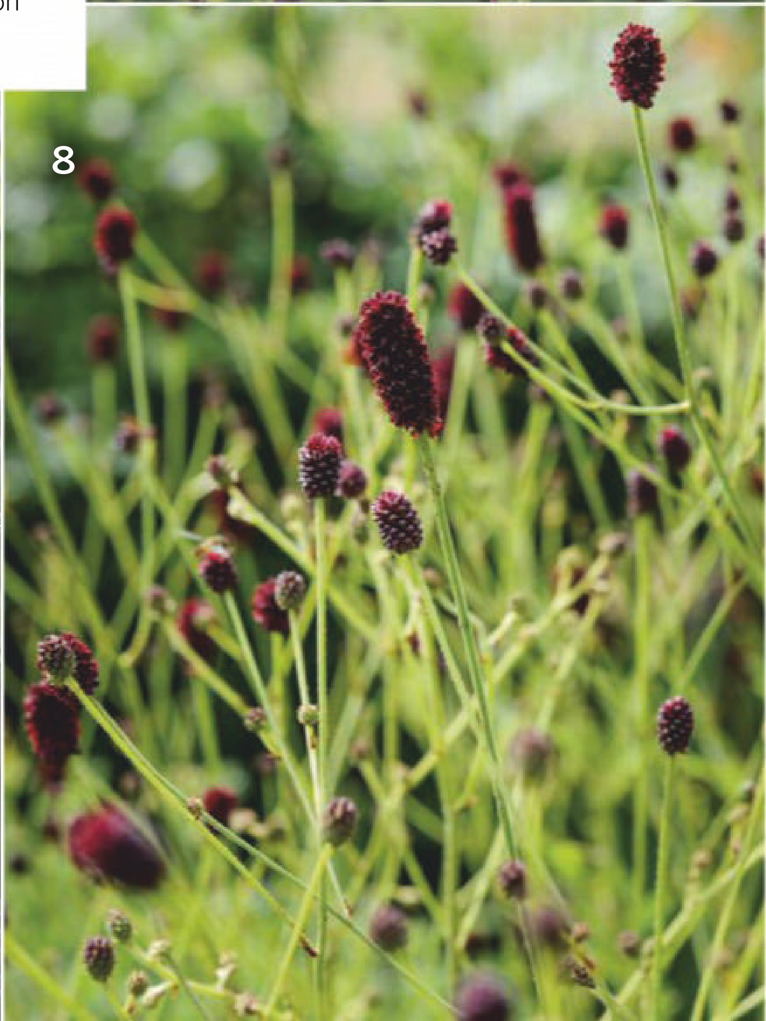
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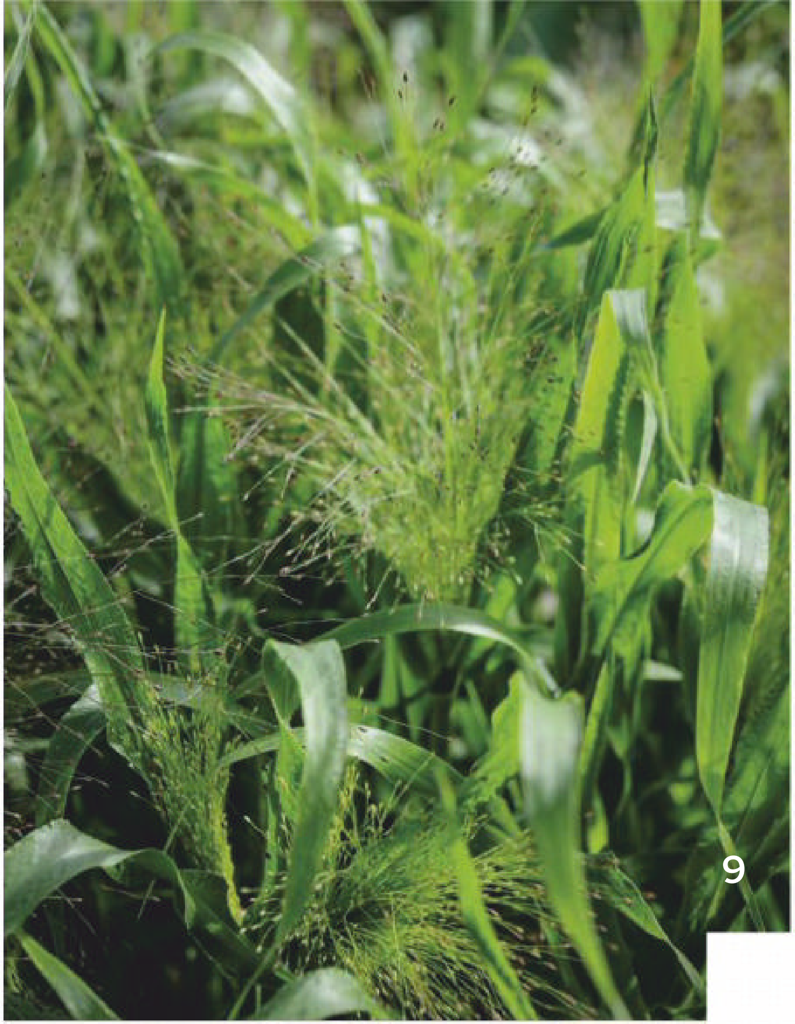
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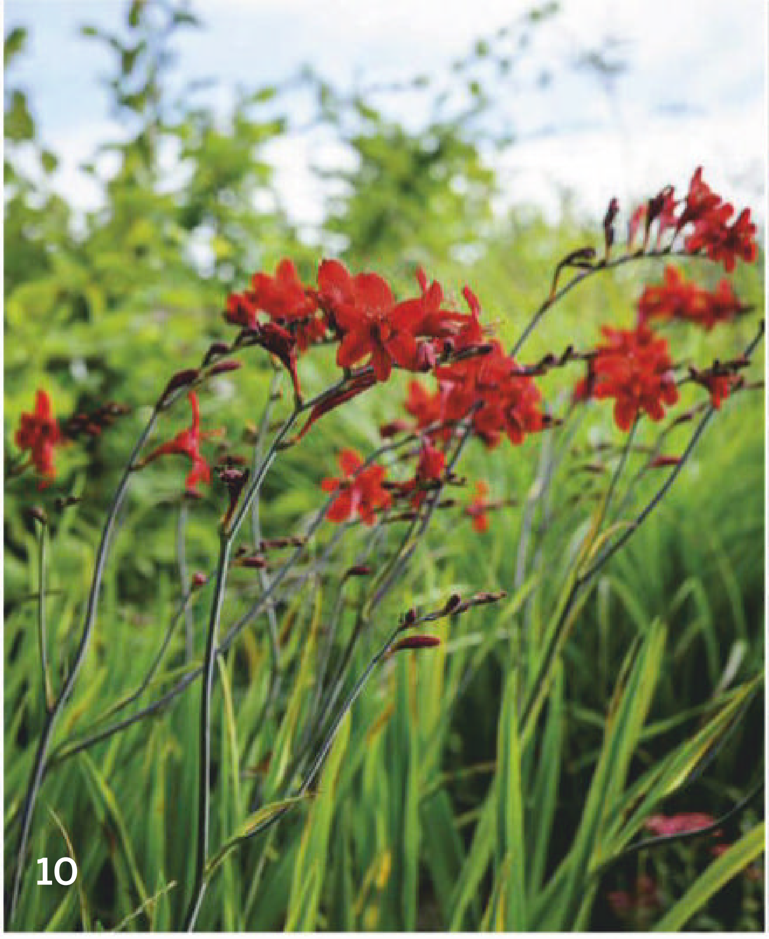
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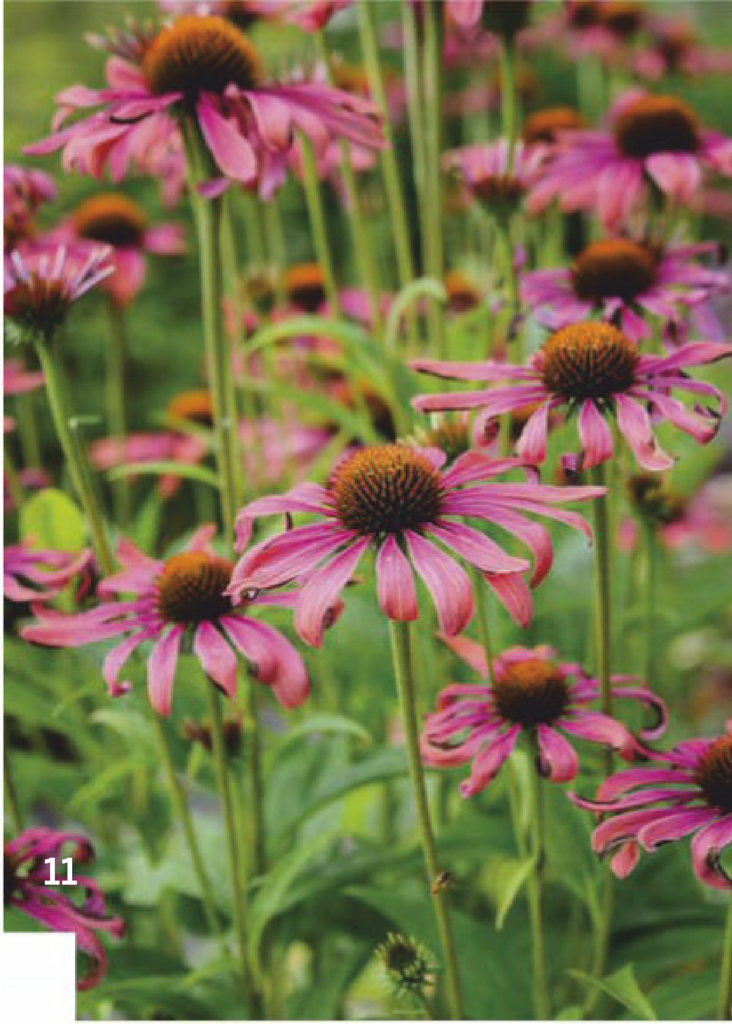
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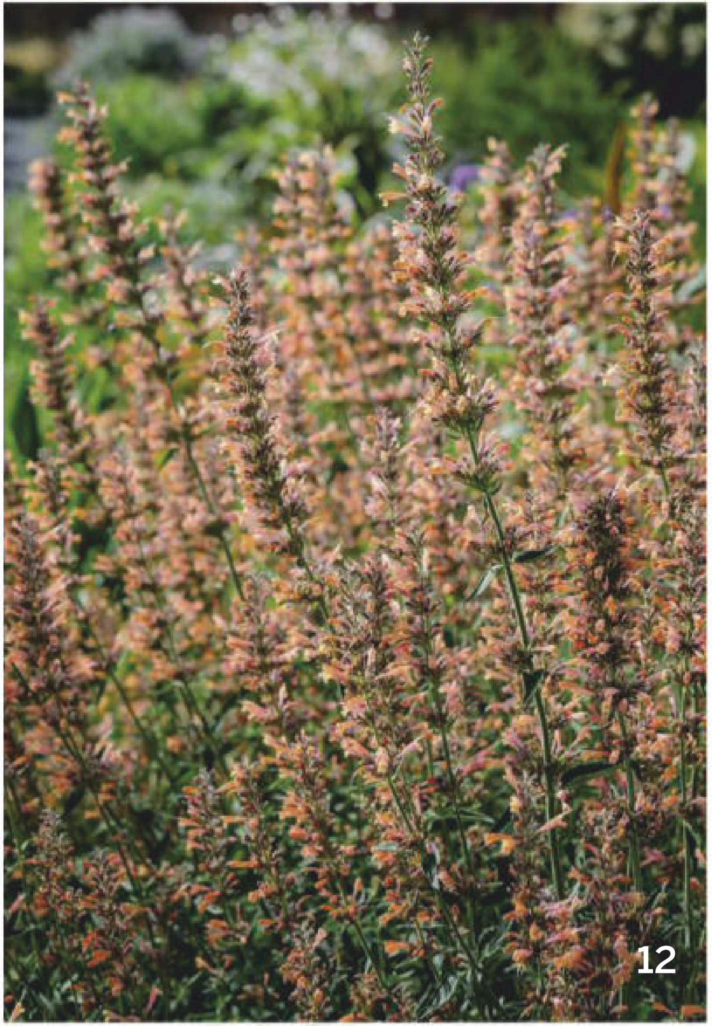
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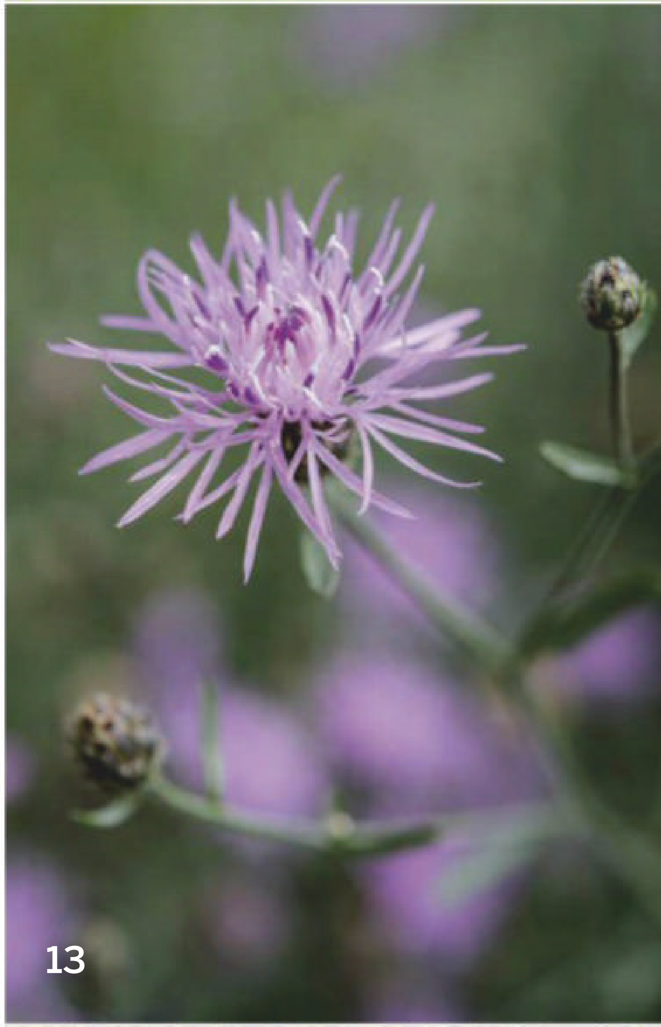
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9 *Agrostis nebulosa*
A dramatic, easy-to-grow, half-hardy annual that needs starting off with a little heat. Long panicles of airy, delicate flowers. 60-80cm.

10 *Crocosmia* 'Hellfire'
A huge improvement on 'Lucifer', with larger flowers that are pure, darkest-red. It also doesn't spread as aggressively. Flowers for weeks. Grows to 60-75cm. AGM*. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

11 *Echinacea* 'Roze Rood'
The best of the Wildegoose trials of red echinacea. If you stop it flowering for three years, you will be rewarded with masses of flowers the following summer. Mulch with gravel or coarse grit to keep off slugs in winter. 1m.

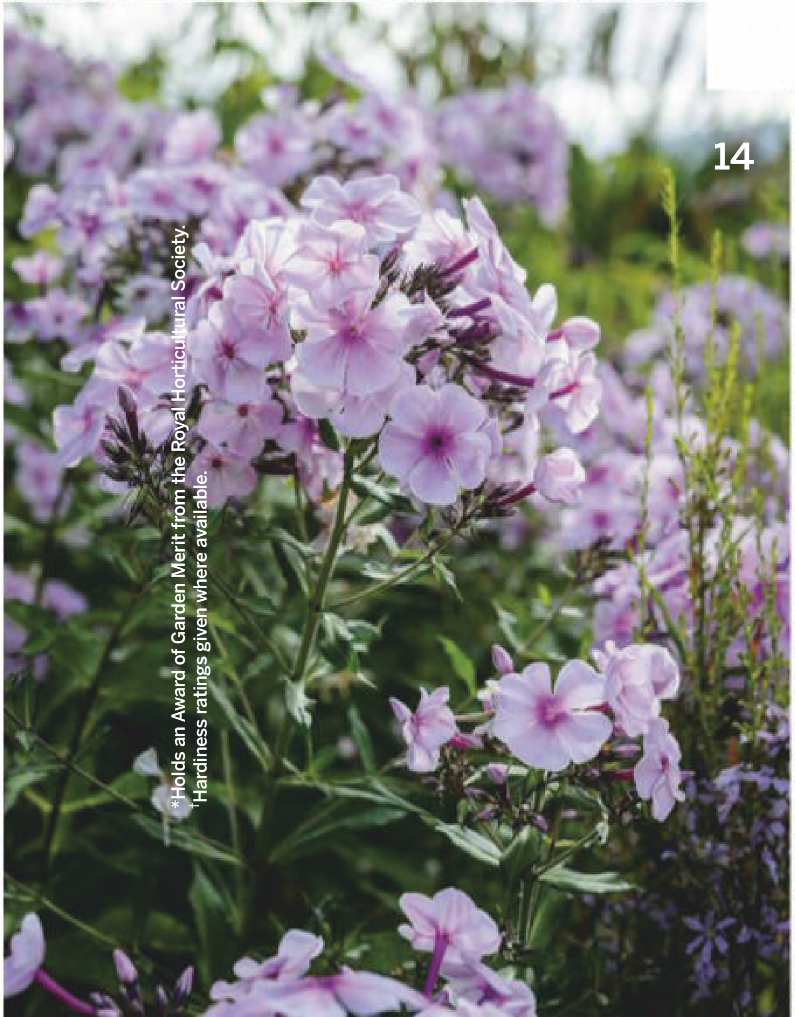
12 *Agastache* 'Kolibri'
A long-lasting, upright hyssop that doesn't spread, with salmon-coral blossom and a long flowering period from June to September. 80cm.

13 *Centaurea jacea*
This brown knapweed has huge mounds of little thistle flowers on sturdy stems. Works best if you can give it space to cascade. The seedheads are much loved by goldfinches in winter. 80cm.

14 *Phlox paniculata* 'Charlotte'
Rose-pink flowers with a darker, deep-pink eye,dusky foliage, and a good, strong fragrance. The flowers form a rounded head, and it has a neat, upright appearance. 75-90cm. USDA 4a-8b.

15 *Origanum* 'Bristol Cross'
This oregano has almost hop-like calyces that bend over and are tipped with pink flowers. Keeps a very neat habit. Flowers from July to September. 30cm. USDA 5a-9b.

16 *Melica ciliata*
A silver-coloured grass that sits in neat, erect clumps and has narrow, silky, white flowers that fade to cream. It is a short-lived perennial, but may self-seed if happy. 75cm. RHS H6.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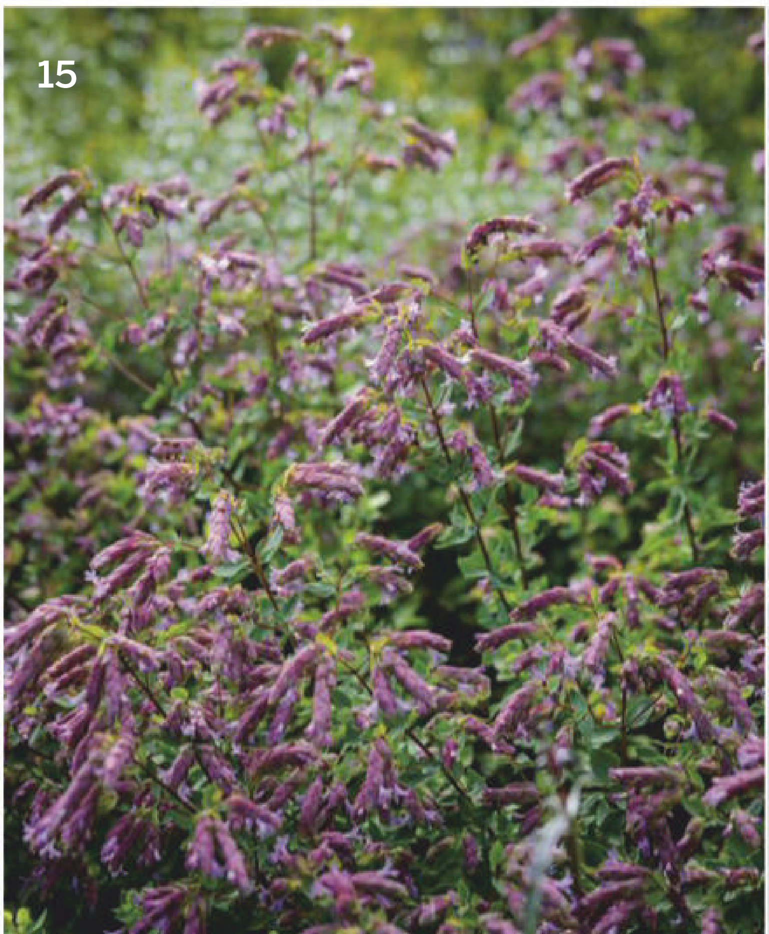
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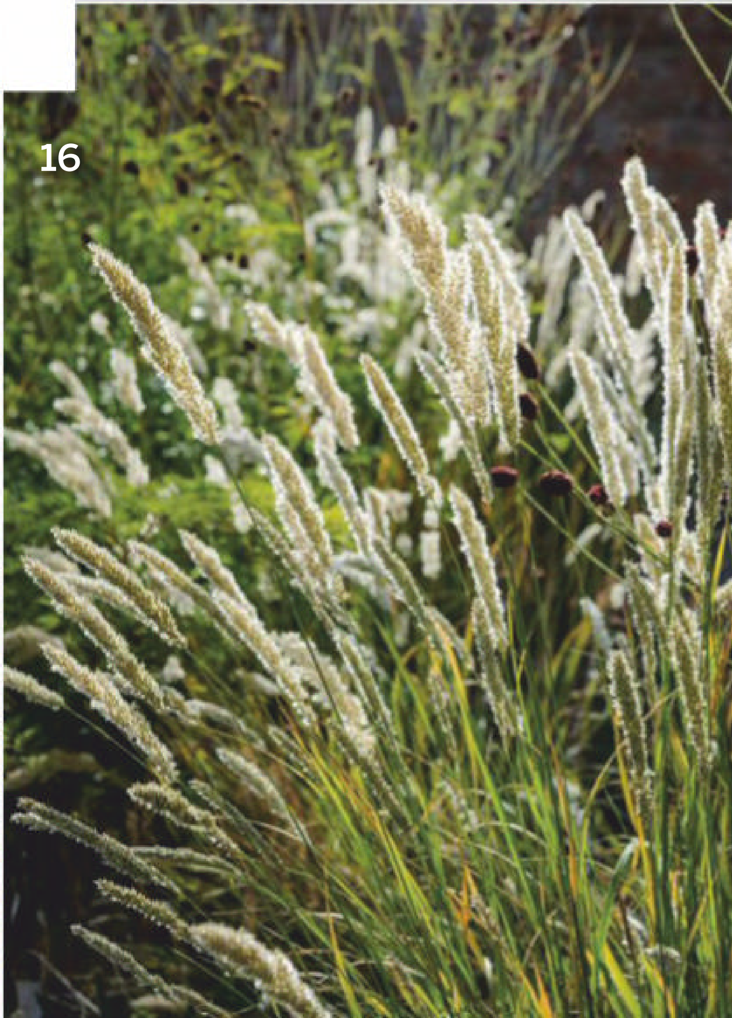
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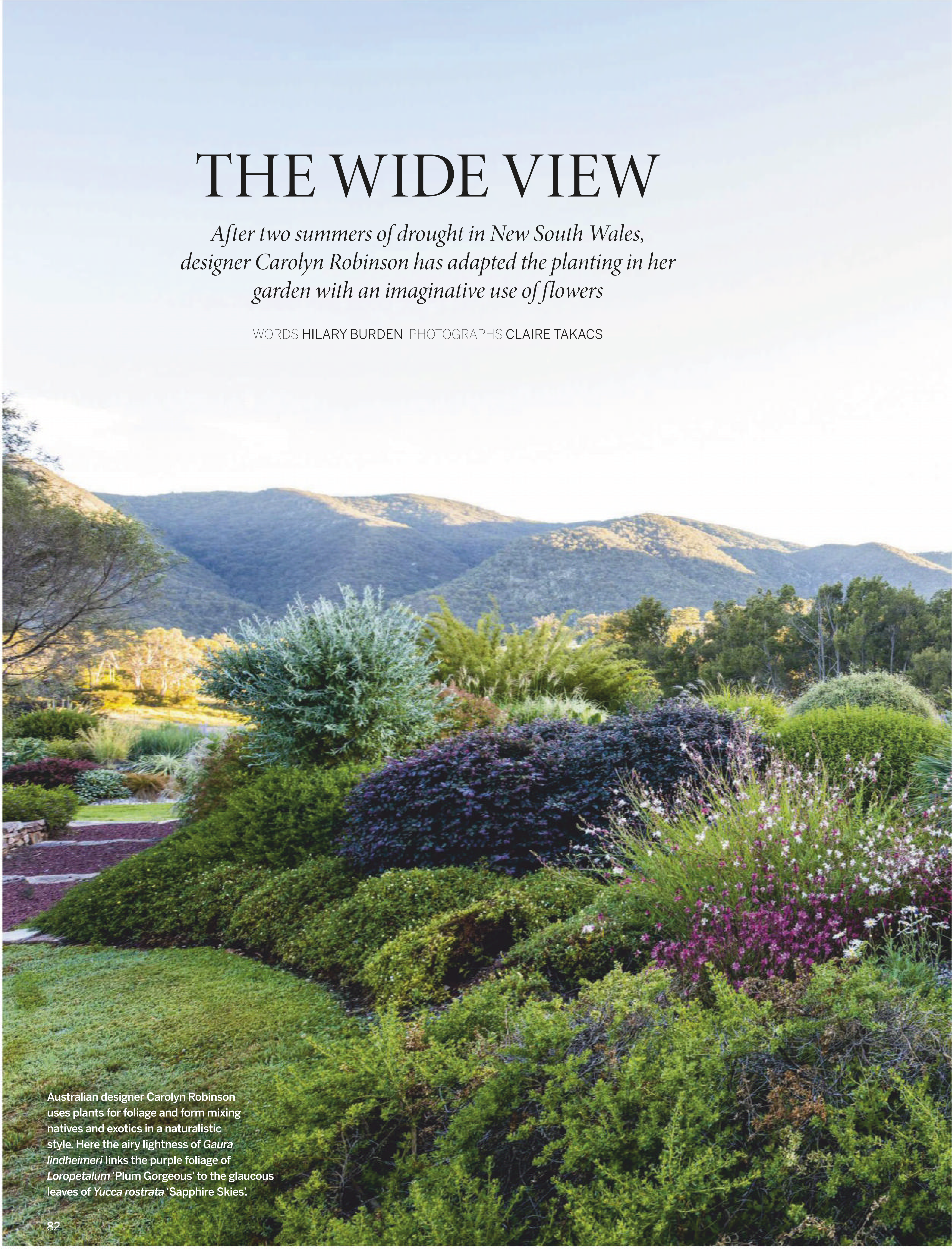
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

THE WIDE VIEW

After two summers of drought in New South Wales, designer Carolyn Robinson has adapted the planting in her garden with an imaginative use of flowers

WORDS **HILARY BURDEN** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLAIRE TAKACS**



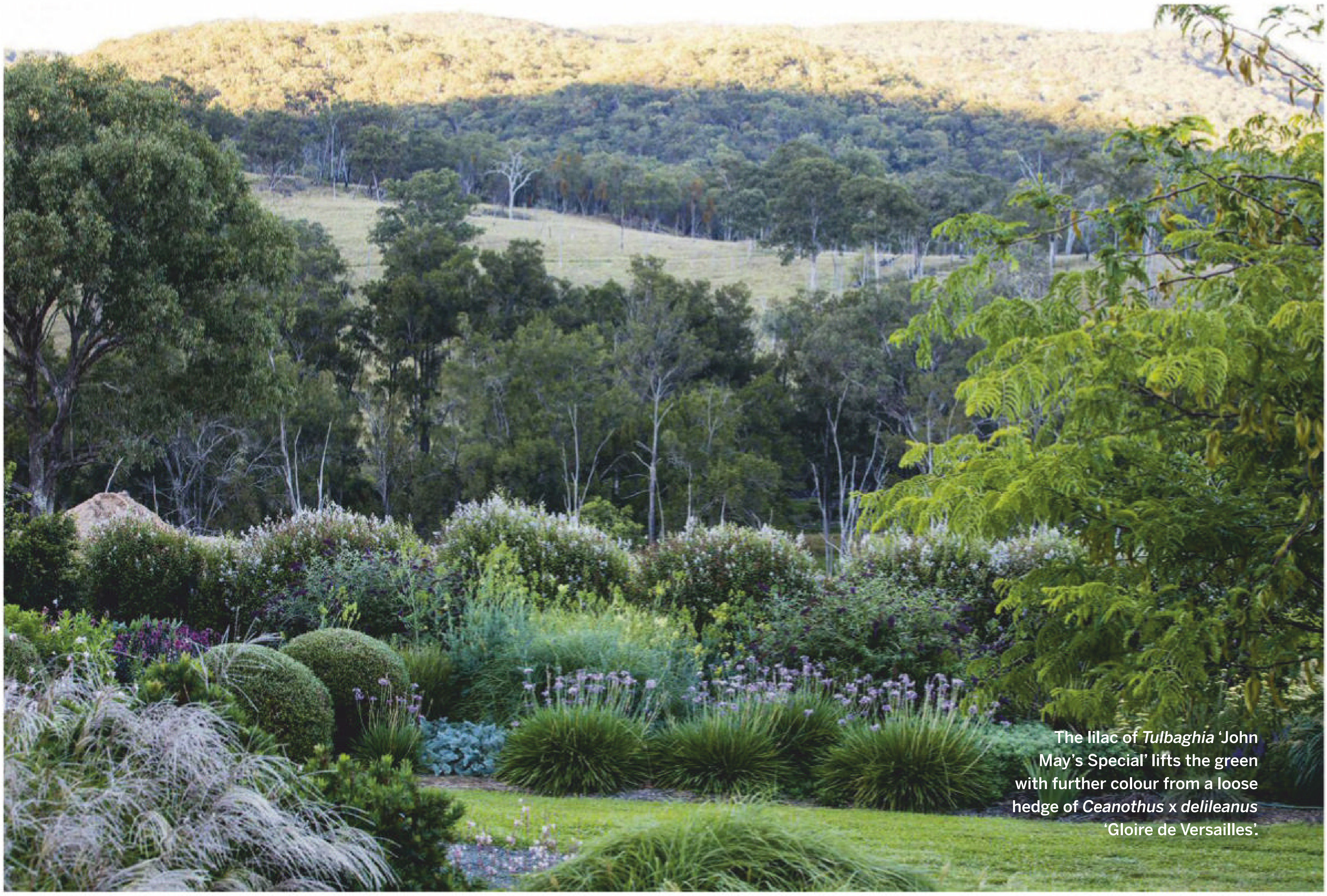
Australian designer Carolyn Robinson uses plants for foliage and form mixing natives and exotics in a naturalistic style. Here the airy lightness of *Gaura lindheimeri* links the purple foliage of *Loropetalum* 'Plum Gorgeous' to the glaucous leaves of *Yucca rostrata* 'Sapphire Skies'.

IN BRIEF

Name Eagles Bluff.
What Private garden, combining natives and exotics in a wild, rugged setting.
Where Northern New South Wales, Australia.
Size Five acres.
Soil Poor granite soil that is well-drained with a pH of 5-6.
Climate The sub-tropical latitude means harsh sunlight and little rain. However, the mountain altitude (650 metres) means for much of the year the garden has a cool climate with winter temperatures to -6°C.

Pontederia cordata, *Iris pseudacorus* and *I.* Louisiana hybrids edge the pool in front of the house, over which can be seen views of the Bluff River Nature Reserve.

Colour comes to the fore in the prairie garden where blue *Perovskia atriplicifolia* complements yellow *Achillea* 'Hella Glashoff' and the purple of *Dierama pulcherrimum*.



The lilac of *Tulbaghia* 'John May's Special' lifts the green with further colour from a loose hedge of *Ceanothus* x *delileanus* 'Gloire de Versailles'.

I ALWAYS FELT MY ROLE WAS IN SOFTENING THE FOREGROUND. THE ENVIRONMENT CAN BE PRETTY HARSH

We wanted to be within sight and sound of running water," says Australian garden designer Carolyn Robinson, who in ten years has transformed a bare paddock into an expansive garden that speaks to its rugged bushland setting in northern New South Wales.

The wild Bluff River forms a 2km boundary to the east and south of the property but the region, known as New England, has been in drought for two years, and the river that inspired the purchase of the 300-acre property didn't run for three months last summer. During that time the garden has largely survived on hand watering. "I've been gardening in this region for nearly 30 years and we've never had the heat we've had in the past three summers," says Carolyn. Trust, then, that Carolyn knows as much about planting for beauty as what will survive.

"Those plants that survive drought are very good at scavenging, or extracting water from the soil around them, making life difficult for their neighbours," she says. "I've learned to plant plants such as *Ulmus parvifolia* 'Seiju' and *Ceanothus* x *delileanus* 'Gloire de Versailles' together so they can fight it out among themselves. I've also found that plants such as *Choisya ternata* and *Phlomis* species, can handle quite a lot of heat as long as the moisture is not being completely taken by trees nearby."

By latitude, the climate at Eagles Bluff is sub tropical but the altitude – above 650m – pushes it into a cooler temperate climate. Last winter the temperature got down to -7˚C, while in summer it can reach 40˚C, and range from -6˚C to 20˚C, in one day. "It's a huge challenge for plants," says Carolyn. "Often damage happens through rapid warming when the sun hits plants in the morning."

Although many of Carolyn's borders are adapted for drought planting, her highly imaginative use of flowers is obvious in the deep borders of the prairie garden with its blend of Russian sage, achilleas and ornamental grasses.

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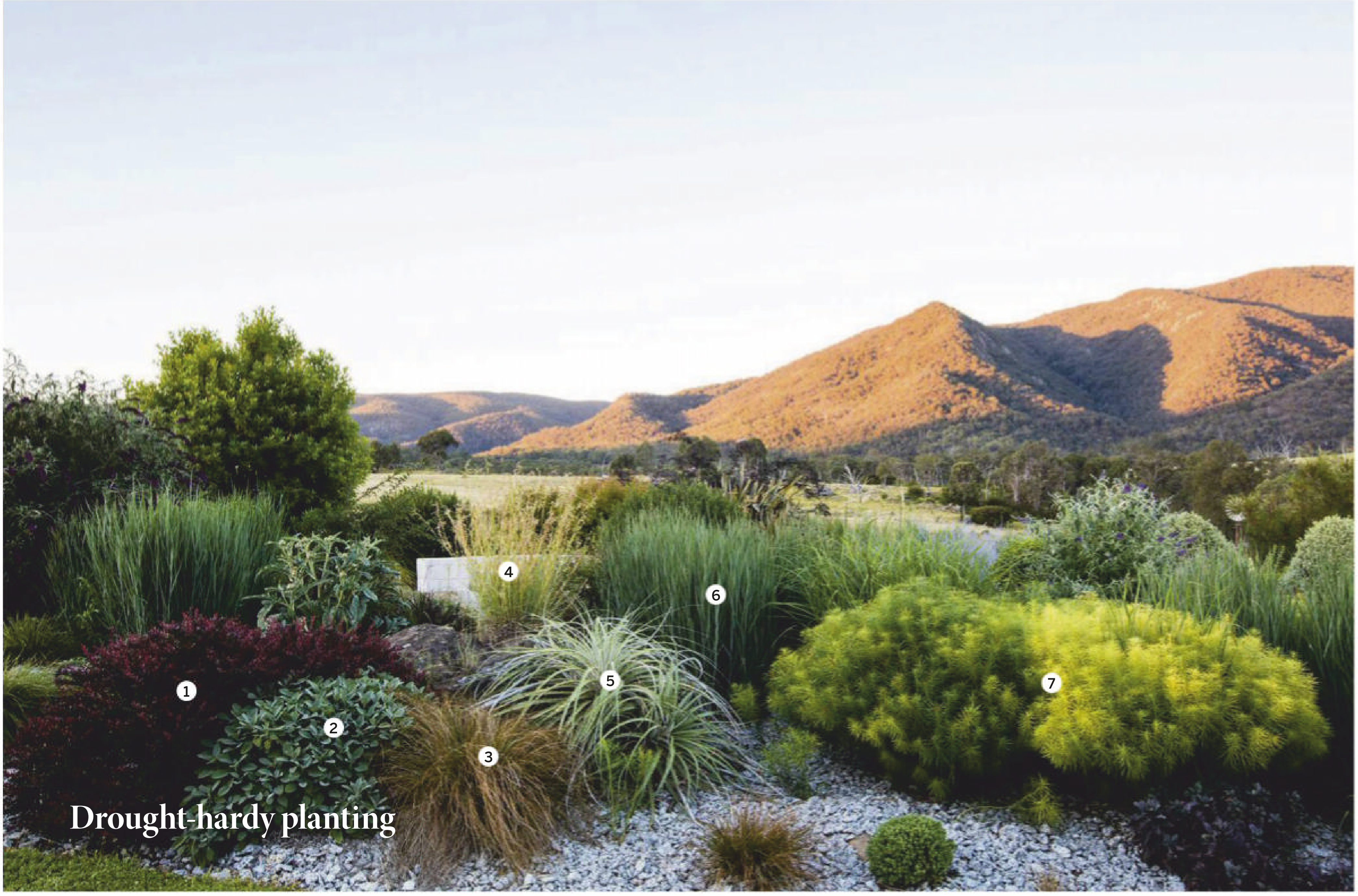


PLANTING AT EAGLES BLUFF

The garden design at Eagles Bluff is informal but at the same time planned and considered. Broad sweeping beds, of ten metres or more, create movement and mystery, and stone walls and stone steps offer changes of level, while also enhancing views and providing focal features. The secret is to combine plants that evolved in similar environments and successfully intermingle natives with exotics. To offset what might be a deluge to the senses, she relies on repetition or mass planting of certain plants, such as *Miscanthus*, *Panicum*, *Salvia*, *Achillea* and *Tradescantia*.

Drought-hardy planting

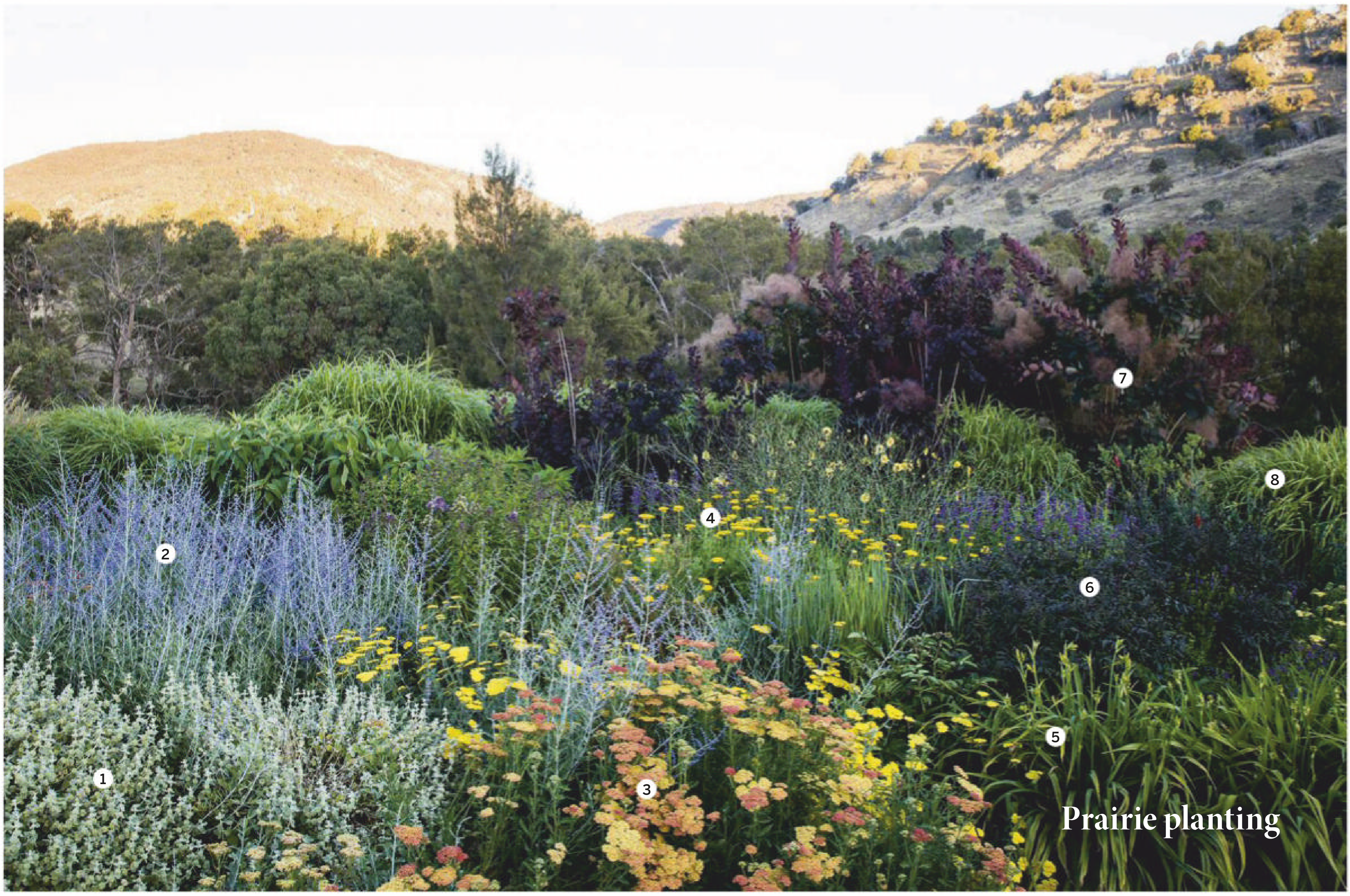
In this sun-loving border, planting is low and tall trees are avoided so as to maintain the view of the Bluff River Wildness mountains. The planting here is a mix of native and Mediterranean shrubs, grasses and sedges, with some herbaceous fillers that are drought hardy, including *Berberis thunbergii* f. *atropurpurea* 'Atropurpurea Nana' (**1**), the low-growing evergreen sage *Salvia officinalis* 'Berggarten' (**2**), *Carex* 'Buchananii' (**3**), *Hyparrhenia hirta* (**4**), which is also known as Coolatai grass, *Puya coerulea* (**5**), *Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal' (**6**) and *Amsonia hubrichtii* (**7**). Carolyn also uses a crushed grey granite mulch to help promote water infiltration.

Prairie planting

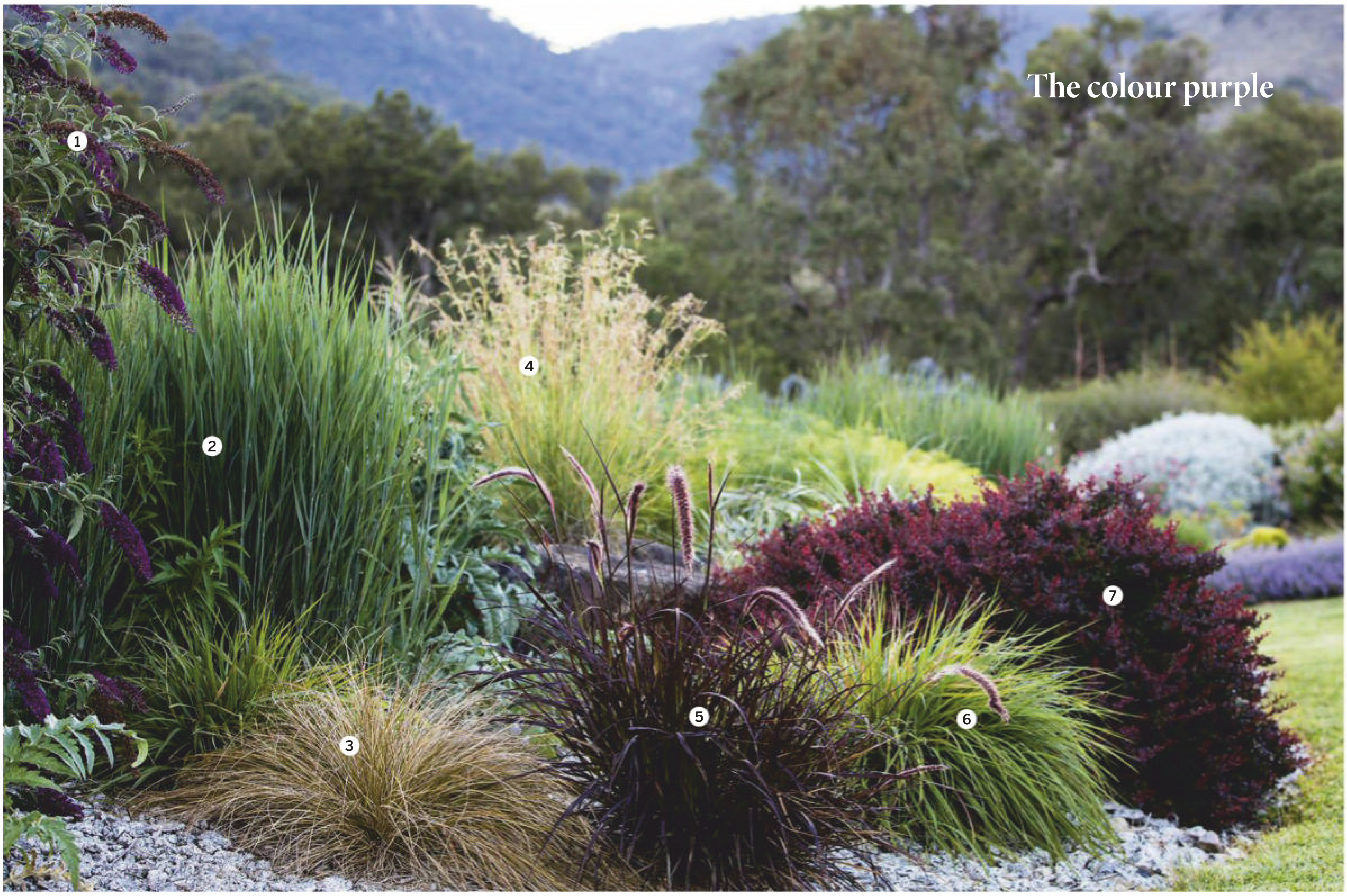
The prairie garden, which includes some of Carolyn's favourite plants, allows experimentation with colour. Here the silver foliage of the sub-shrub *Ballota pseudodictamnus* (**1**) and pale-blue flowers of *Perovskia atriplicifolia* (**2**) add a cool counterpoint to the yellows and oranges of *Achillea* 'Hoffnung' (**3**), *Achillea filipendulina* 'Gold Plate' (**4**) and *Hemerocallis* 'Duchess of Windsor' (**5**), while the deep blue of *Penstemon* 'Willy's Purple' (**6**) ties the foreground planting to the backdrop shrub *Cotinus* 'Grace' (**7**) and tall ornamental grass *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Zebrinus' (**8**).

The colour purple

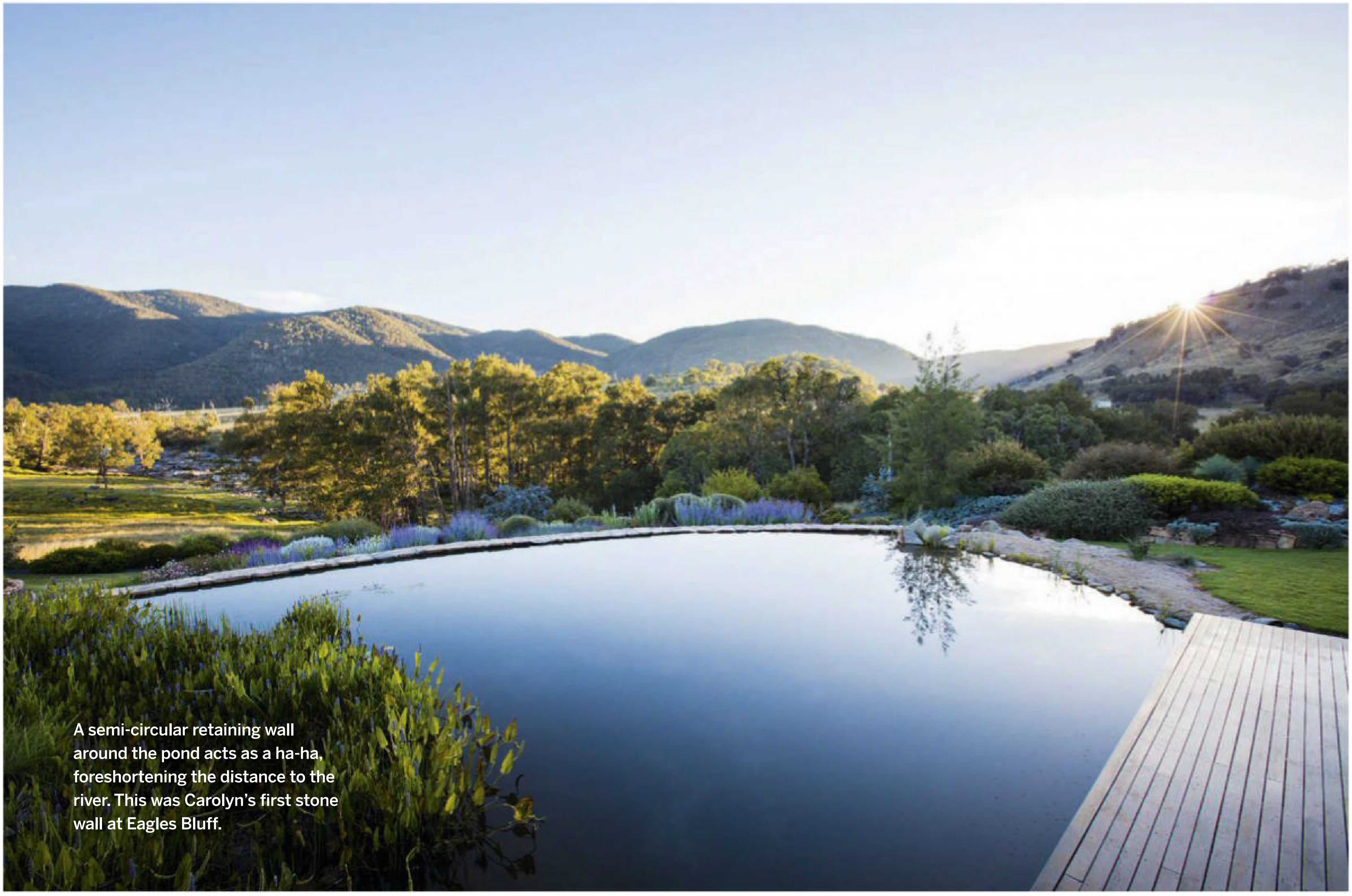
Purple foliage,along with stone walls, has become a signature of Carolyn's work. Not only does purple combine well with the glaucous shades of much native Australian vegetation, but it also acts as a foil for the harsh Australian sun. In this section of the gravel border the rich-purple flowers of *Buddleja davidii* 'Black Knight' (**1**) set the tone for this low-growing combinations of purple and green that includes *Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal' (**2**), *Carex buchananii* (**3**), *Hyparrhenia hirta* (**4**), *Pennisetum advena* 'Rubrum' (**5**), *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Moudry' (**6**) and *Berberis thunbergii* f. *atropurpurea* 'Atropurpurea Nana' (**7**).



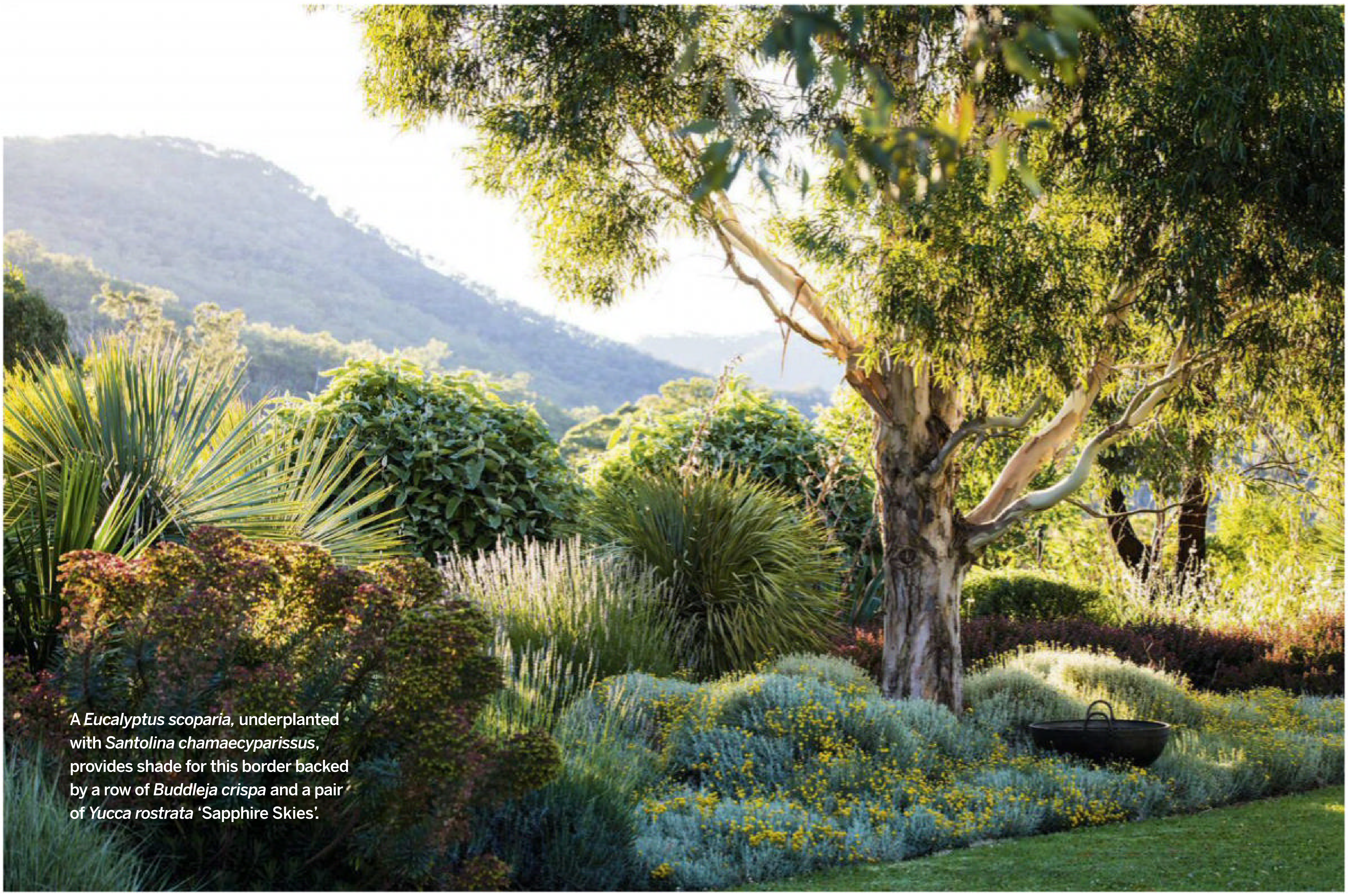
Prairie planting



The colour purple



A semi-circular retaining wall around the pond acts as a ha-ha, foreshortening the distance to the river. This was Carolyn's first stone wall at Eagles Bluff.



A *Eucalyptus scoparia*, underplanted with *Santolina chamaecyparissus*, provides shade for this border backed by a row of *Buddleja crispa* and a pair of *Yucca rostrata* 'Sapphire Skies'.

Gaura lindheimeri is planted beneath deciduous trees, such as *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* and *Robinia x ambigua* 'Decaisneana', which offer summer shade while letting in winter sun.

CAROLYN HAS CREATED A GARDEN IN HARMONY WITH THE COUNTRYSIDE AND ENHANCED ITS SPIRIT OF PLACE

▷ Carolyn mainly plants for foliage and form using a mixture of natives and exotics in a naturalistic style. She says the colours of the foliage are there for much longer; that it's the ornamental grasses that give you the length of season.

A particular love is the contrast between clipped shrubs and the soft free-form habit and movement of ornamental grasses and flowering perennials. "My strategy now is to plant schemes with longevity as the goal and I try to avoid having to replant, which is always fraught with difficulties. Trees are now planted either as single specimens or in borders or beds together with appropriate underplantings of species that successfully co-habit with trees. "I'm not really trying to recreate habitat. It's as much about aesthetics. By planting plants that require the same conditions but come from different countries, you achieve a greater depth of foliage and colour contrast."

With the surrounding landscape already so aesthetically pleasing, Carolyn observes the compulsion to garden is less strong. "We've enjoyed being out further in the bush with the landscape more dominant around us – and me having to work with that. I'm less driven to impose my own sense of beauty. I always felt my role was in softening the foreground. In Australia our environment can be pretty harsh, so I use planting as a way of softening our immediate environment for shelter and shade and a bit of green around the house. That's why I wanted ornamental grasses and Australian natives, included alongside other plants. I was looking out into the landscape so I wanted the plantings to merge with it."

Through letting go, Carolyn has created a garden in harmony with the wider countryside and enhanced its spirit of place. A welcome bonus has been the garden growing its own ecosystem. "From a site that would have supported few creatures, a diversified food chain has now sprung up," observes Carolyn. "The garden has become rich in bio-diversity – an often understated benefit of creating a garden." ☐

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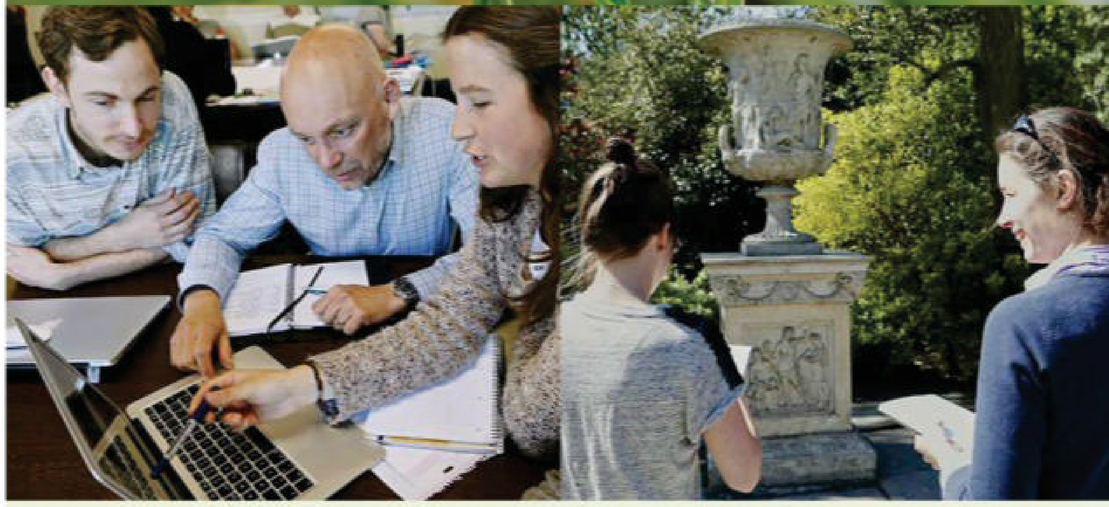

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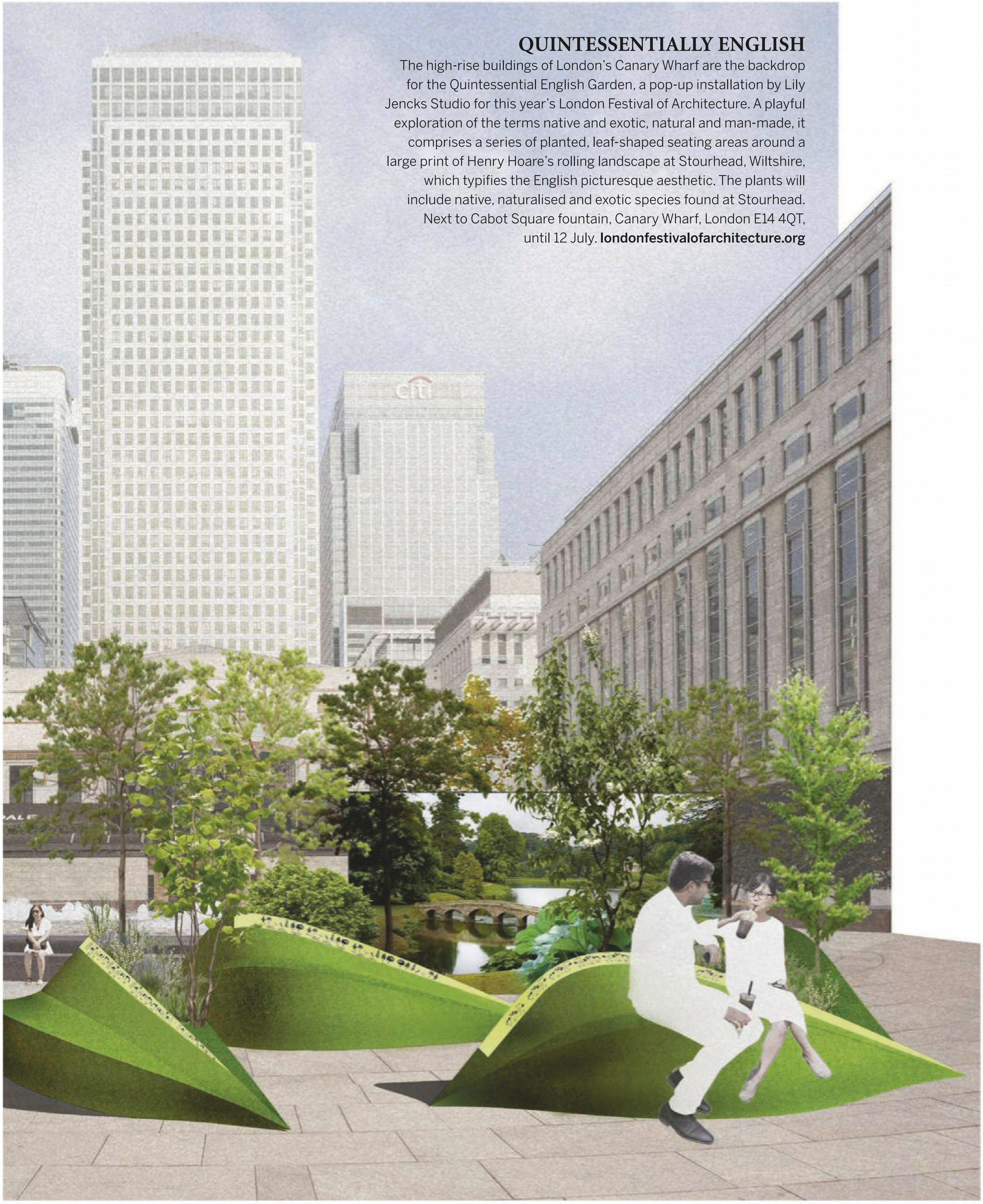

QUINTESSENTIALLY ENGLISH

The high-rise buildings of London's Canary Wharf are the backdrop for the Quintessential English Garden, a pop-up installation by Lily Jencks Studio for this year's London Festival of Architecture. A playful exploration of the terms native and exotic, natural and man-made, it comprises a series of planted, leaf-shaped seating areas around a large print of Henry Hoare's rolling landscape at Stourhead, Wiltshire, which typifies the English picturesque aesthetic. The plants will include native, naturalised and exotic species found at Stourhead. Next to Cabot Square fountain, Canary Wharf, London E14 4QT, until 12 July. **londonfestivalofarchitecture.org**

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Garden of Medicinal Plants – Chelsea Physic Garden Photo: R.Alexander

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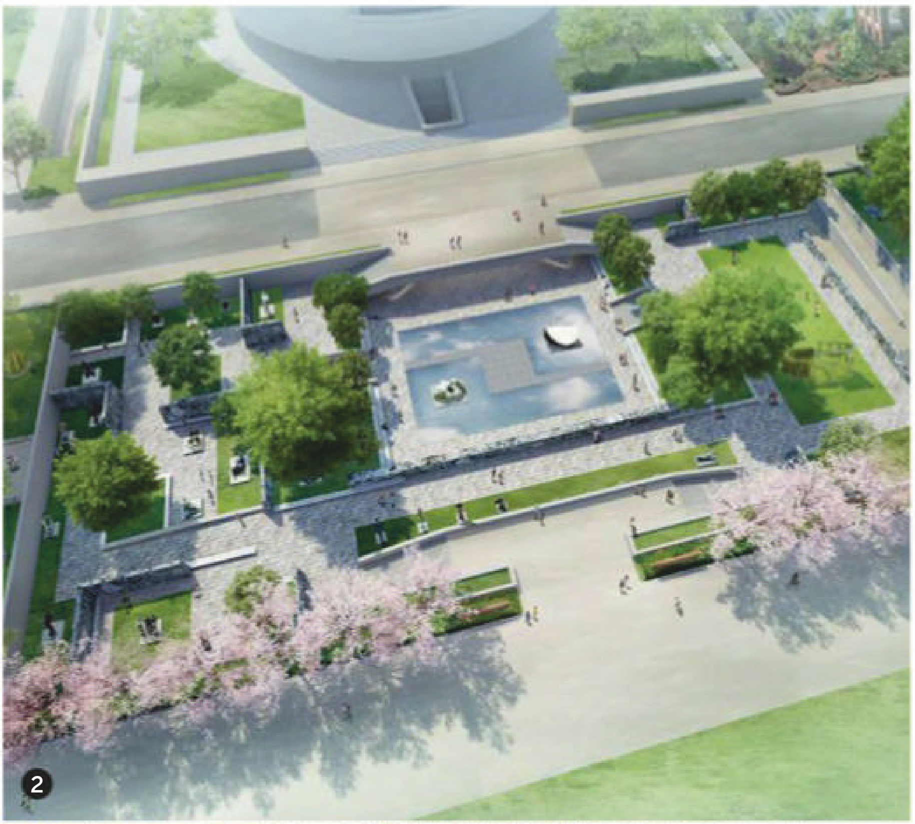
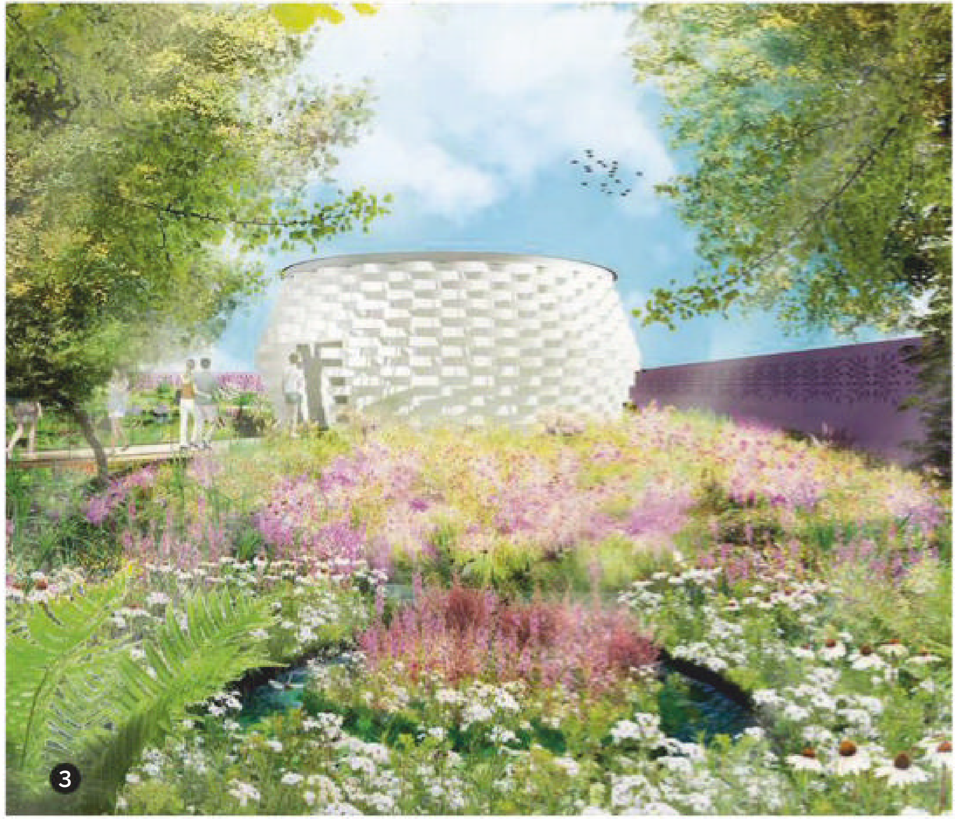
NEWS

COMPILED BY **ANNIE GATTI**





PLAY-TIME ARCHITECTURAL IMAGERY, HIROSHI SUGIMOTO, GRANT ASSOCIATES, DIETMAR STRAUB

① EDUCATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

A new zero-net-energy design school has opened at the National University of Singapore. Designed by London-based Serie Architects and Singapore firm Multiply Architects, it was conceived as a prototype of sustainable design. The six-storey School of Design and Environment has an open architecture that creates visual and spatial links to the surrounding landscape. Terraces and balconies provide open-air learning spaces and help ventilate the building. A projecting roof shades the south façade, while a screen of perforated aluminium panels filters light and air into the research zones. **serie.co.uk**

② ON REFLECTION

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington DC has approved the redevelopment of the Sculpture Garden that returns to architect Gordon Bunshaft's original scheme, which featured a large reflecting pool. Japanese artist and architect Hiroshi Sugimoto, who recently renovated the museum's main lobby, has proposed replacing the central patch of lawn with a reflecting pool. The scheme, a collaboration between Sugimoto's New Material Research Laboratory and Yun Architecture, includes new trees, an underground passage to the museum's plaza, and a new entrance that opens the garden to the National Mall. **hirshhorn.si.edu**

③ LANDSCAPES OF LEGACY

Grant Associates has designed The Rewilding Garden, a permanent exhibition garden on behalf of the International Association of Horticultural Producers for the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Exposition. The garden, which embraces the theme of 'Live Green, Live Better', has an elevated boardwalk leading through an urban forest with seating snugs to a rain garden, pollination meadow and flower pavilion inspired by the shape of a chrysanthemum. Other exhibits include designs by Tom Stuart-Smith and George Hargreaves that will become permanent gardens. Until 7 October. **horti-expo2019.org**

④ ECO-FRIENDLY EXCELLENCE

The WY Garden, a private garden in Winnipeg, Manitoba, has won the Award of Excellence for landscape architects Dietmar Straub and Anna Thurmayr in the 2019 CSLA awards. The sensitive use of recycled materials and naturalistic planting are key elements in this riverside project. A species-rich meadow, an eco-friendly alternative to a mown lawn, stabilises the ground between the river and the house and provides a habitat for wildlife and a space in which to relax. It is overlooked by a tapestry of terraces, framed by salvaged beams and infilled with a variety of materials. **csla-aapc.ca**

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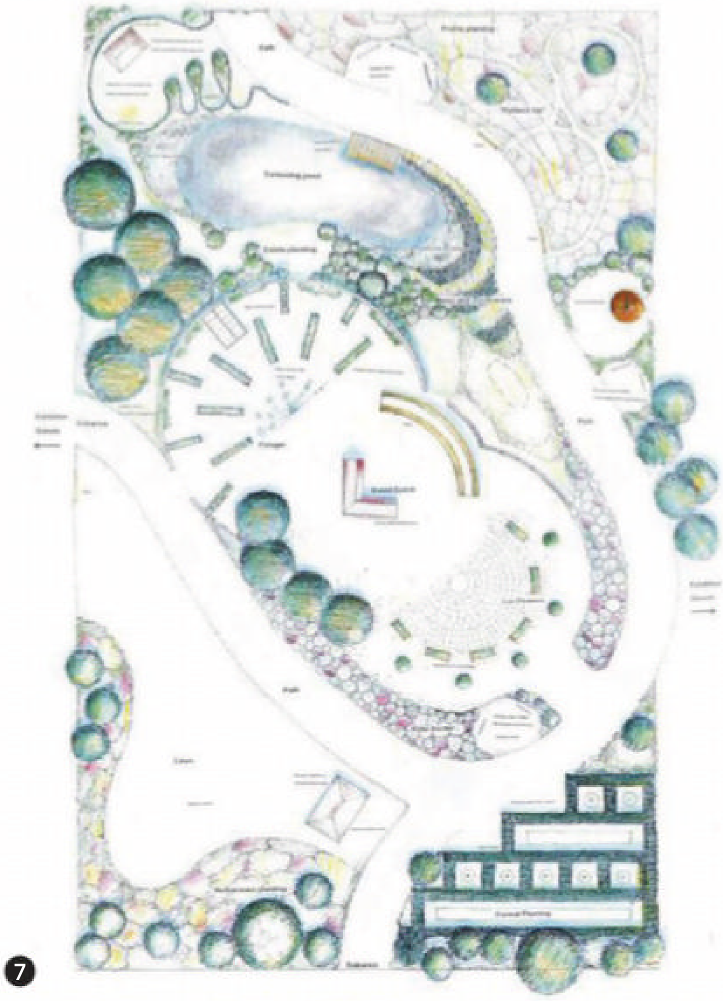
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⑥ RHS HAMPTON COURT GOES WILD

Will Williams, RHS Young Designer of the Year 2018, has designed a wildlife garden for Viking, headline sponsor of this year's RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival. The garden is framed in panels of Jura Grey limestone and clipped *Parrotia persica*. An open-sided, steel-and-glass pavilion with a green roof overlooks the airy planting on one side and a water feature surrounding a multi-stemmed tree on the other. Insect homes and a bird box are incorporated into the stonework. Ula Maria, a former Young Designer of the Year winner, has designed a wellbeing garden for the show. 1-7 July. **rhs.org.uk**

⑦ CAPEL MANOR SHOW GARDEN

A series of themed gardens that tell the story of country gardens and estates is to be built and designed by students from Capel Manor College for the Game Fair held at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire. The one-acre garden will feature a rose border that encloses a cut flower area leading to an event space for talks and demonstrations. Beyond this will be a potager with water feature, an area of trees and shrubs that represent estate planting, and a swimming pond with viewing platform. Prairie planting will extend across a sloping area at one corner. 26-28 July. **thegamefair.org**

⑧ DESIGN COMPETITION

Coppin Dockray Architects has won an open competition to design a hypothetical new centre for the Maggie's Centre cancer charity. The winning design, a thatched-roof building made from brick and timber, is set in an imagined walled garden made up of tended open spaces, including a mini orchard, a kitchen garden and a greenhouse. Launched by Maggie's Newcastle and building specification experts NBS, the competition, Make Maggie's Yours, also included a student category, which was won by Kirsten Adjei-Attah, from Coventry University. **coppindockray.co.uk**

⑨ NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

A garden designed by Raymond Jungles for the Conservatory Lawn at the New York Botanical Garden forms part of a major exhibition of the works of the Brazilian modernist artist and landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx. Jungles, a protégé of Burle Marx, has designed a Modernist garden with boldly patterned paths that lead through curvilinear beds to an open plaza with a large pool framed by a wall carved in relief. A selection of brightly coloured annuals, and other plants characteristic of Burle Marx's work, fill the beds, while mature palms lend the scheme scale. Until 29 September. **nybg.org**

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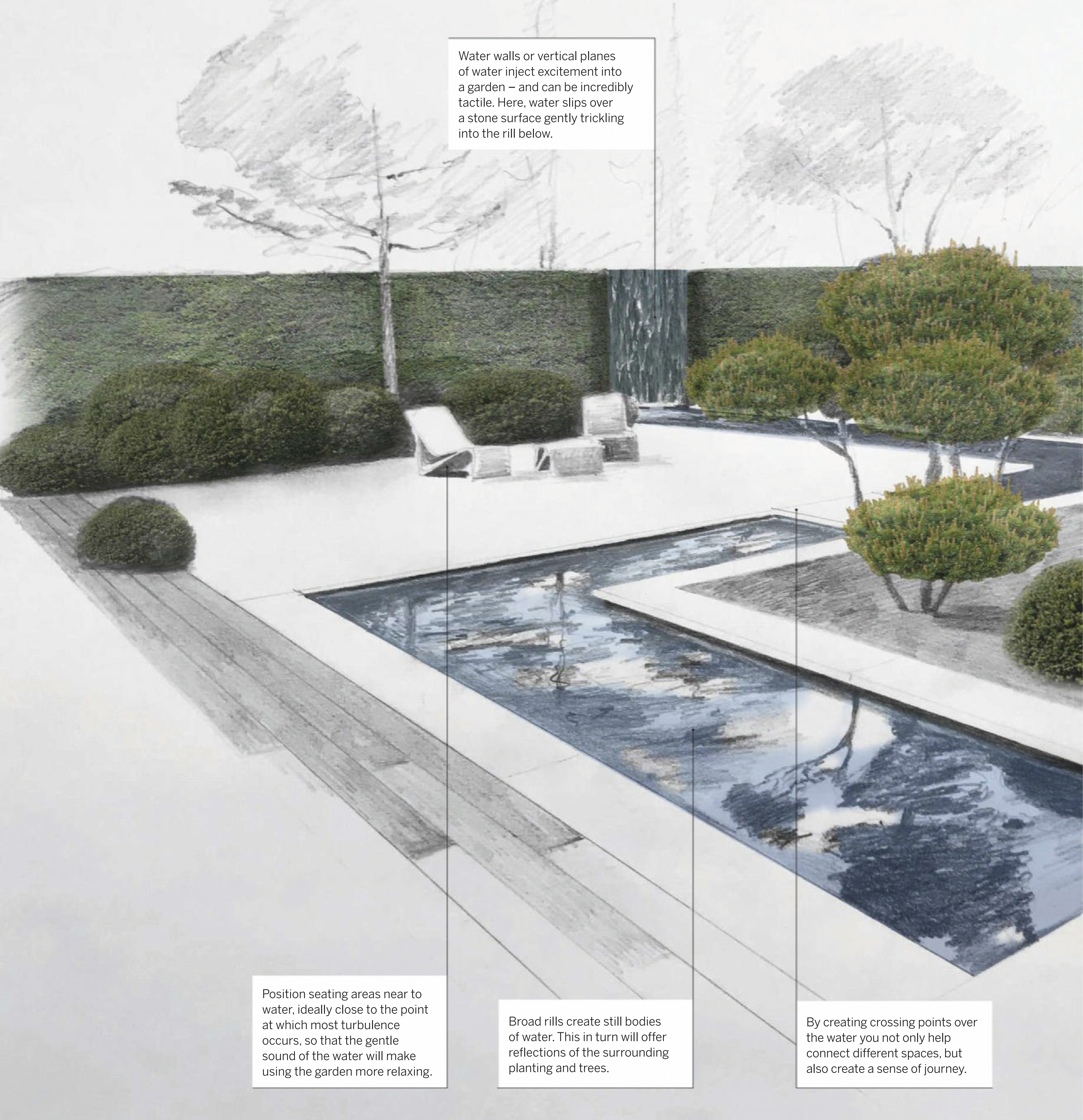
SOUND AND VISION

Few elements bring quite as much magic to a garden as water, says designer Matt Keightley, adding movement and sound that can muffle unwelcome noise

WORDS AND ILLUSTRATION **MATT KEIGHTLEY**



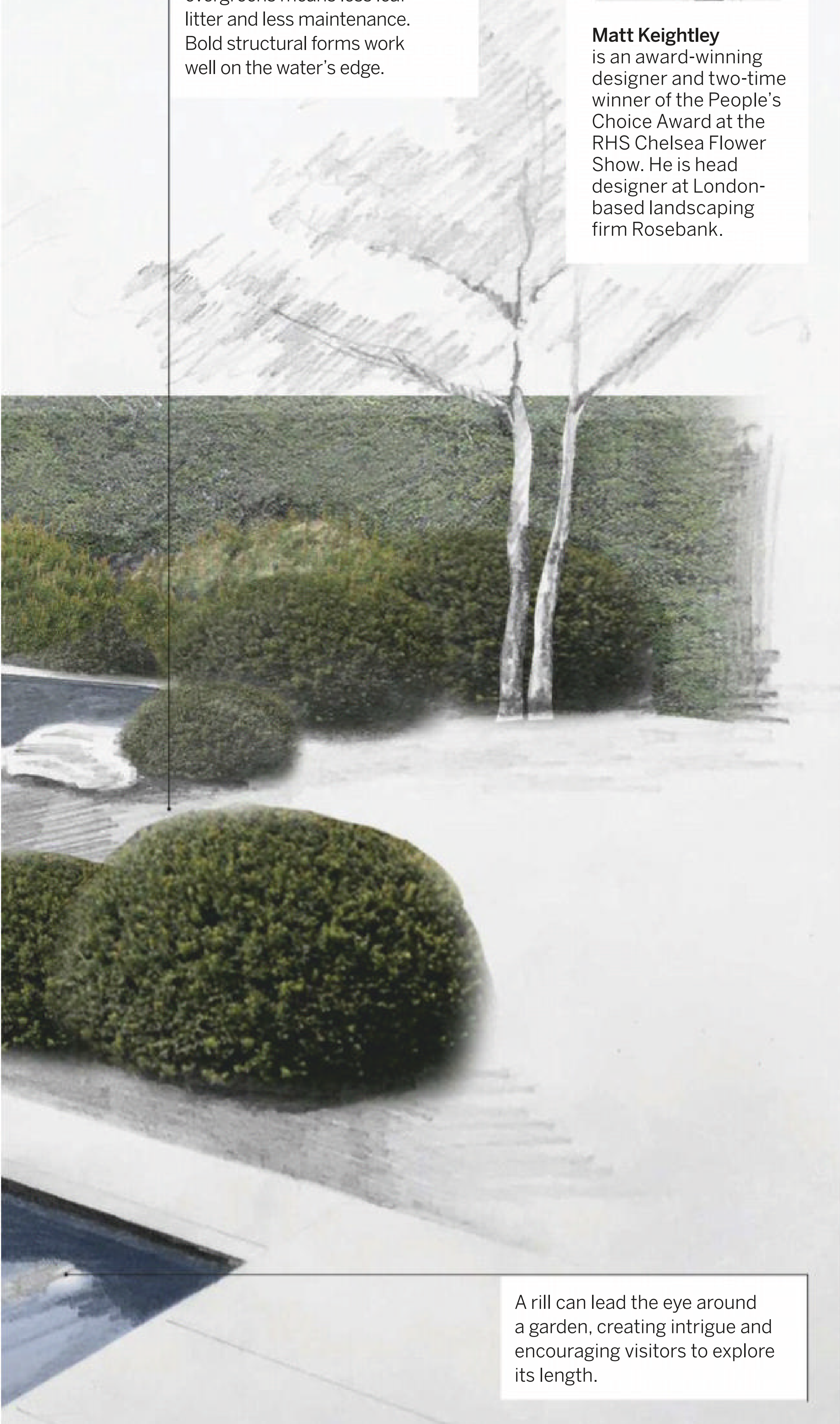
Water walls or vertical planes of water inject excitement into a garden – and can be incredibly tactile. Here, water slips over a stone surface gently trickling into the rill below.

Position seating areas near to water, ideally close to the point at which most turbulence occurs, so that the gentle sound of the water will make using the garden more relaxing.

Broad rills create still bodies of water. This in turn will offer reflections of the surrounding planting and trees.

By creating crossing points over the water you not only help connect different spaces, but also create a sense of journey.

Matt Keightley is an award-winning designer and two-time winner of the People's Choice Award at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. He is head designer at London-based landscaping firm Rosebank.



Planting a higher density of evergreens means less leaf litter and less maintenance. Bold structural forms work well on the water's edge.

A rill can lead the eye around a garden, creating intrigue and encouraging visitors to explore its length.

Water can help to enhance a garden space like no other feature. It brings a touch of magic to the garden, intensifying the atmosphere with an air of infinite intrigue. Water will reflect the light, ripple in a breeze, and perhaps introduce a gentle splashing sound that will muffle noises from beyond the boundaries of the garden.

After planting, water is the element that will most effectively bring any garden to life. No sooner do you introduce water into a garden than birds, bees and insects will be drawn to it. It draws my attention too, in the same mesmerising way that I can stare for hours into the flickering flames of an open fire.

I try to include water in almost every garden I design. Sometimes this will be no more than a shallow free-standing bowl with a single dwarf waterlily. More often it will be a significant part of the overall design, maybe with a broad channel of water running through the entire width of a space, or in the form of a bespoke water wall that is part sculpture, part water feature, drawing every eye to a focal point.

SELF-CONTAINED UNITS

In an urban environment where space is at a premium, a self-contained unit can be practical and extremely effective. Look at the steel tanks that feature in many of Tom Stuart-Smith's gardens. These have their origins in agricultural water troughs for cattle, but look very striking when bedded into a voluminous planting scheme. Usually these won't even need a water supply, just the right pump and filtration equipment.

A water wall is another form of self-contained unit, albeit one in a completely different style. This is a great way to exploit the vertical planes in a garden, especially in a confined space, and it will create a really dramatic focal point.

I am also a big fan of a water rill, which I usually design with one of two effects in mind. I either create an area of deeper water that appears still in the rill itself, but ultimately spills out into a pond or reservoir at the end of the run, or I keep the rill shallow and rely on the base material to create turbulence, movement and interest as the water flows over it. Both are mesmerising and calming in their own way. The first option is usually more appropriate for smaller gardens where a sleek and simple steel chute might do the trick. A shallow turbulent rill can work in many different settings, including very grand gardens. Perhaps the most famous of these is the narrow rill at Rousham House in Oxfordshire, which meanders through the space and almost seems to take you gently by the hand and guide you forward, encouraging you to meander through the space yourself, really emphasising that sense of excitement that comes from exploring a garden for the first time.

> **A WATER FEATURE NEED BE NO MORE THAN A SHALLOW BOWL WITH A SINGLE WATERLILY**

REFLECTED GLORY

I find broad rills are incredibly effective for their reflective qualities and the sense of depth they can give to a space. I also enjoy exploring the opportunities presented by the exit point of the water. If it is sited very close to the water line of the ▷

AS TOLD TO JODIE JONES

▷ reservoir, a rill will provide a discreet, gentle sound and minimal water movement. In contrast, increasing the level difference will increase the volume and turbulence, heightening the sense of interest and excitement. This can be useful in a very practical sense to drown out the noise of traffic or neighbours but, if you were to place this change of levels out of sight where the water can be heard but not seen, then it will also introduce an air of mystery and romance into the garden that encourages visitors to go wandering in search of the source of the sound.

Rills can work in many different styles of garden thanks to the infinite choice of materials available. In a contemporary setting you might use polished steel, but in a more classical garden perhaps natural or riven stone would be a better option. A rill can dissect an area of planting or carve through pathways and terraces. It can be purely formal and ornamental, or double as an interactive feature in a space designed to be enjoyed by children – although if you do have visions of children splashing and paddling about then avoid sharp vertical edges and go for a rill with a gentle scalloped shape instead.

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

Water bowls are the simplest way to enhance a space. For just a few pounds you can get hold of a shallow bowl that will throw out fascinating reflections. It can be small enough to sits on a coffee table and maybe even double up as a bird bath. During the day, float a few flowers from the garden on its surface, and then by night light floating candles. You will need to change the water once a week, but that is a small price to pay for such an attractive feature.

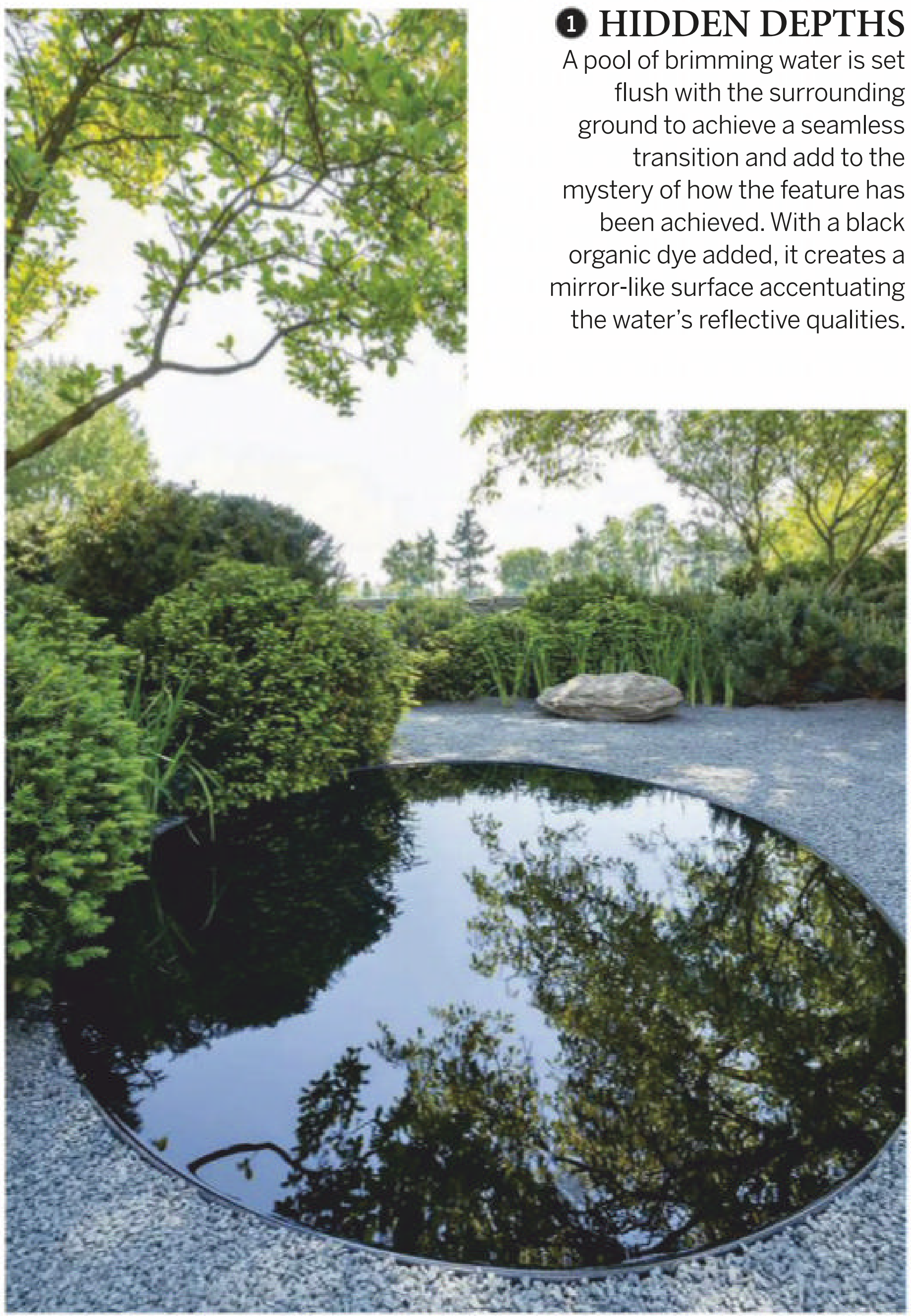
The bowl's diameter could be as small as 30cm, or as large as a couple of metres. These micro ponds are simple to manage, and you can even introduce water movement if you place a reservoir underneath and continuously pump the water to the point of overflowing. For this you can either buy an off-the-peg recirculating unit or drill and seal an inlet into the base of your chosen bowl. If you do go down this route then think carefully about your choice of container. A bowl with a textured surface will help exaggerate the effects of rippling and sound, while a smooth surface will create a more calming flow.

A BOWL WITH A TEXTURED SURFACE WILL HELP EXAGGERATE THE EFFECTS OF RIPPLING AND SOUND

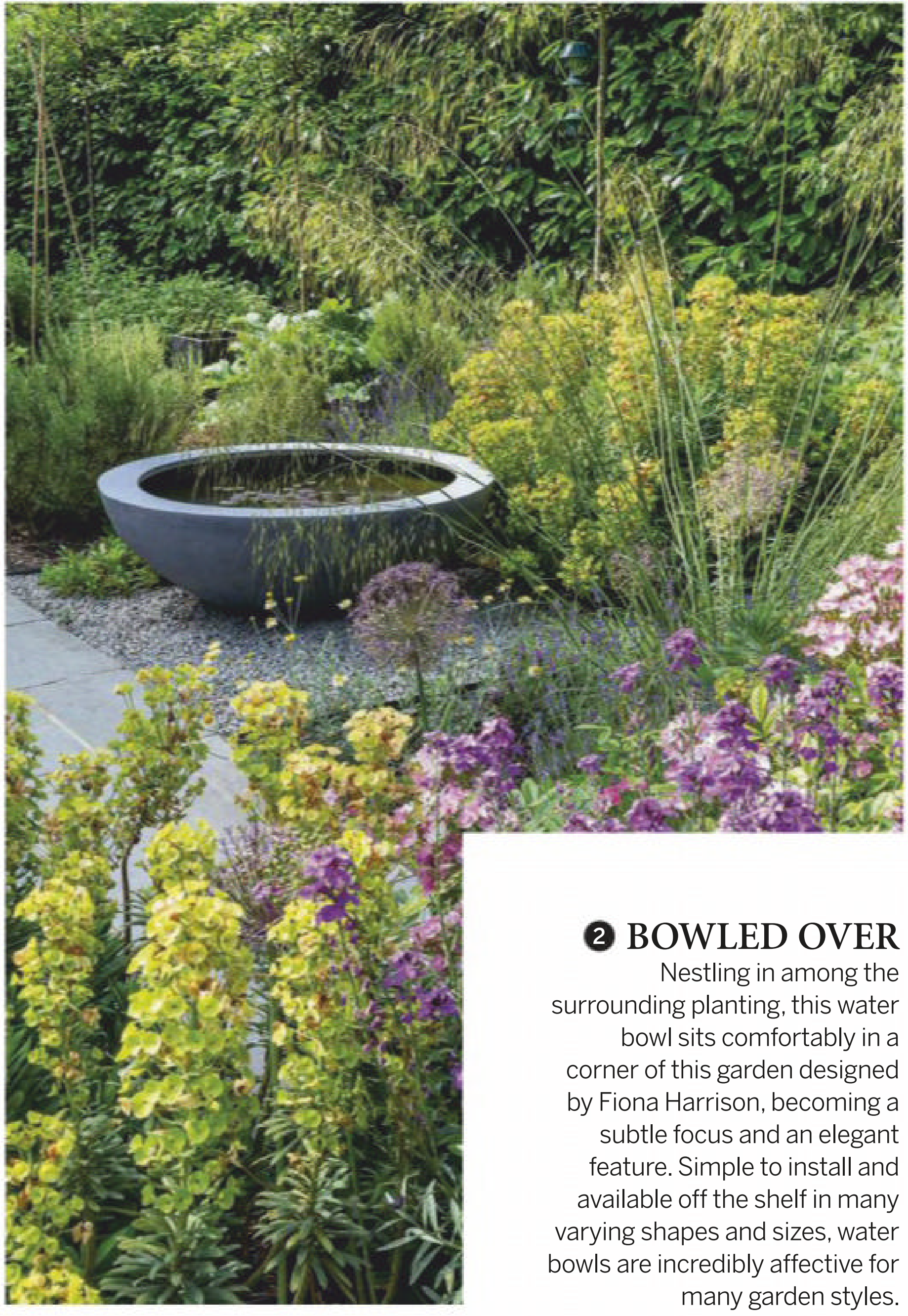
I prefer using shallow bowls, with a diameter that is far greater than their height. This is an utterly subjective aesthetic choice but my reasoning is that the lower the surface of the water is to the ground, the more you can exploit the possibilities for reflection – from the surrounding planting, larger trees, and even the sky above. Using a small, moveable bowl offers you the opportunity to find the best position for your water feature and exploit the effect natural light has on the water as the sun moves around the garden throughout the day.

CALMING EFFECT

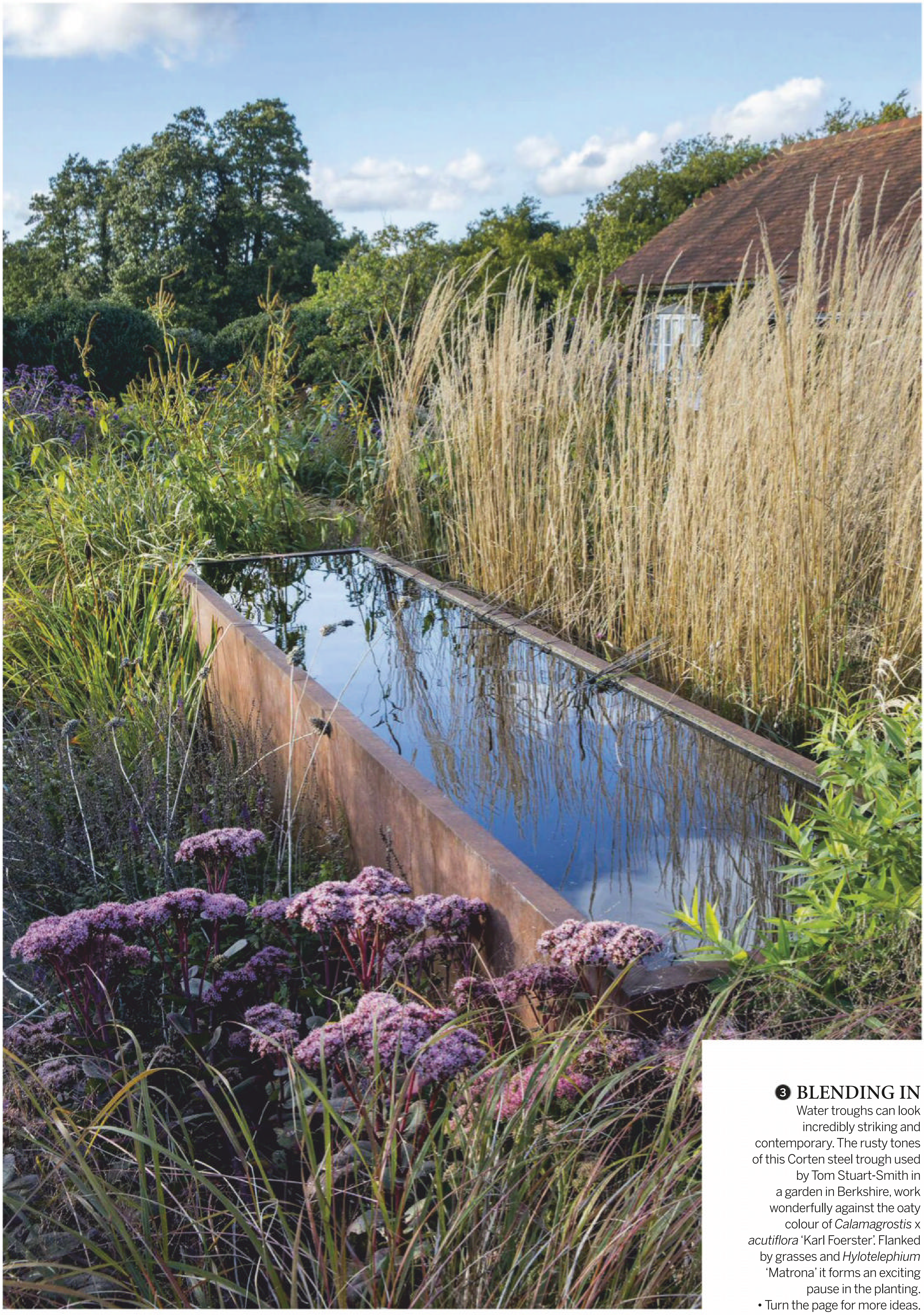
Whether you are organising the wholesale redesign of your garden or simply looking to enhance your existing space, there are always endless opportunities for you to make space for water. No matter how big or what your style of garden, water always brings a sense of calm that allows you to forget your everyday troubles and relax in your own private sanctuary. ☐



❶ HIDDEN DEPTHS
A pool of brimming water is set flush with the surrounding ground to achieve a seamless transition and add to the mystery of how the feature has been achieved. With a black organic dye added, it creates a mirror-like surface accentuating the water's reflective qualities.



❷ BOWLED OVER
Nestling in among the surrounding planting, this water bowl sits comfortably in a corner of this garden designed by Fiona Harrison, becoming a subtle focus and an elegant feature. Simple to install and available off the shelf in many varying shapes and sizes, water bowls are incredibly affective for many garden styles.

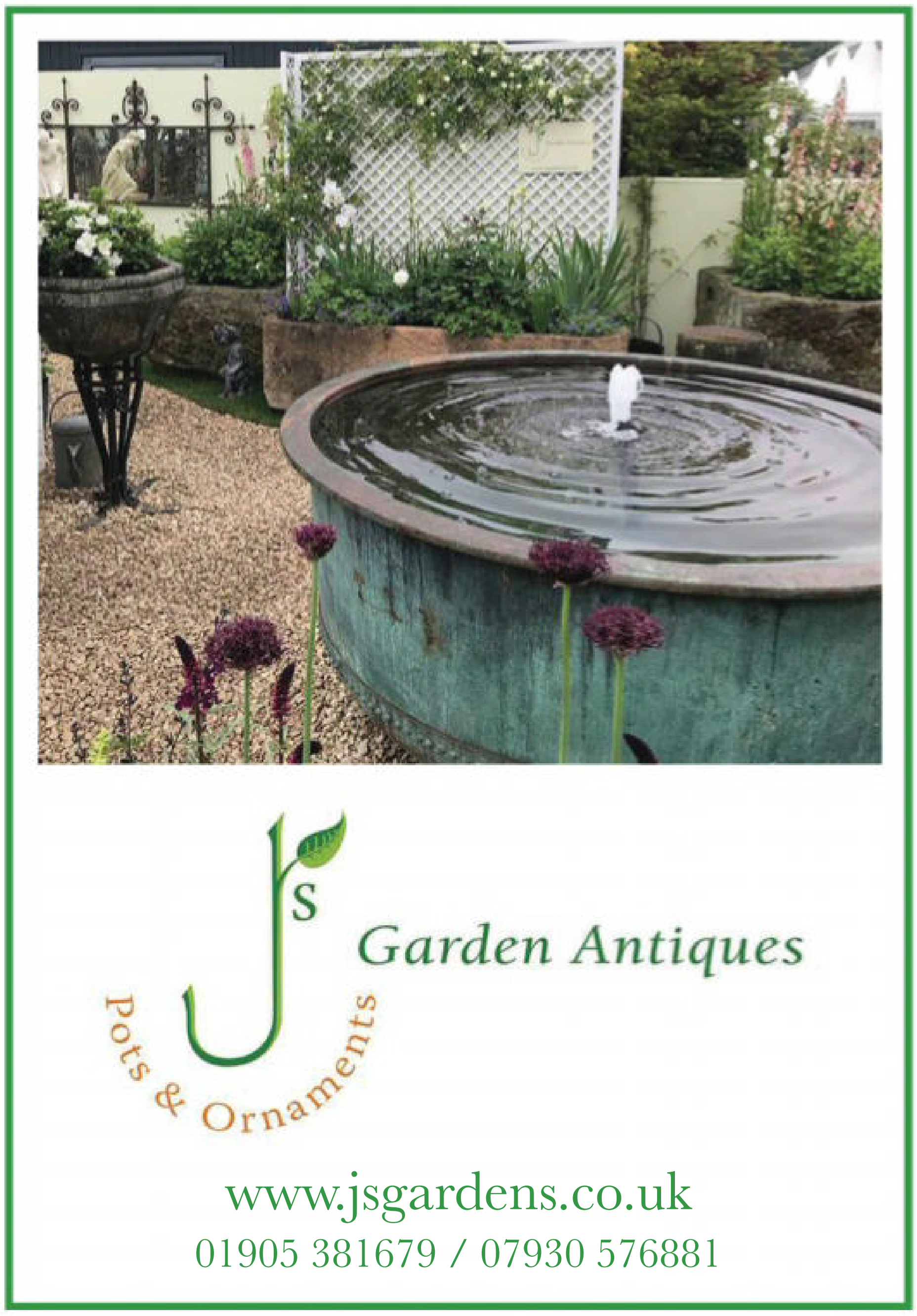


❸ BLENDING IN

Water troughs can look incredibly striking and contemporary. The rusty tones of this Corten steel trough used by Tom Stuart-Smith in a garden in Berkshire, work wonderfully against the oaty colour of *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster'. Flanked by grasses and *Hylotelephium* 'Matrona' it forms an exciting pause in the planting.

- Turn the page for more ideas.

1 MARIANNE MAJERUS, DESIGN MATT KEIGHTLEY ROSEBANK LANDSCAPING; 2 MARIANNE MAJERUS, DESIGN FIONA HARRISON; 3 MARIANNE MAJERUS, DESIGN TOM STUART-SMITH



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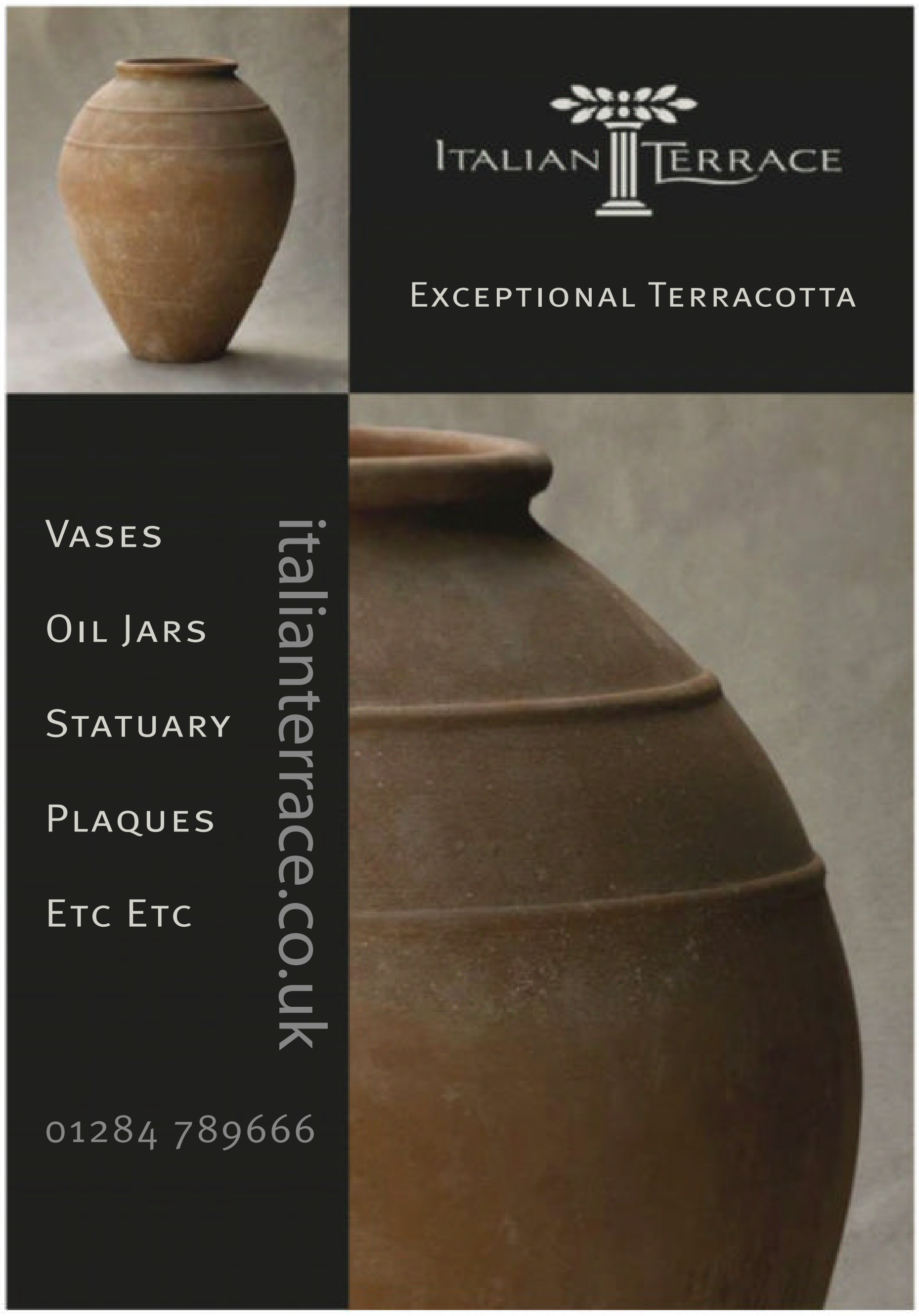

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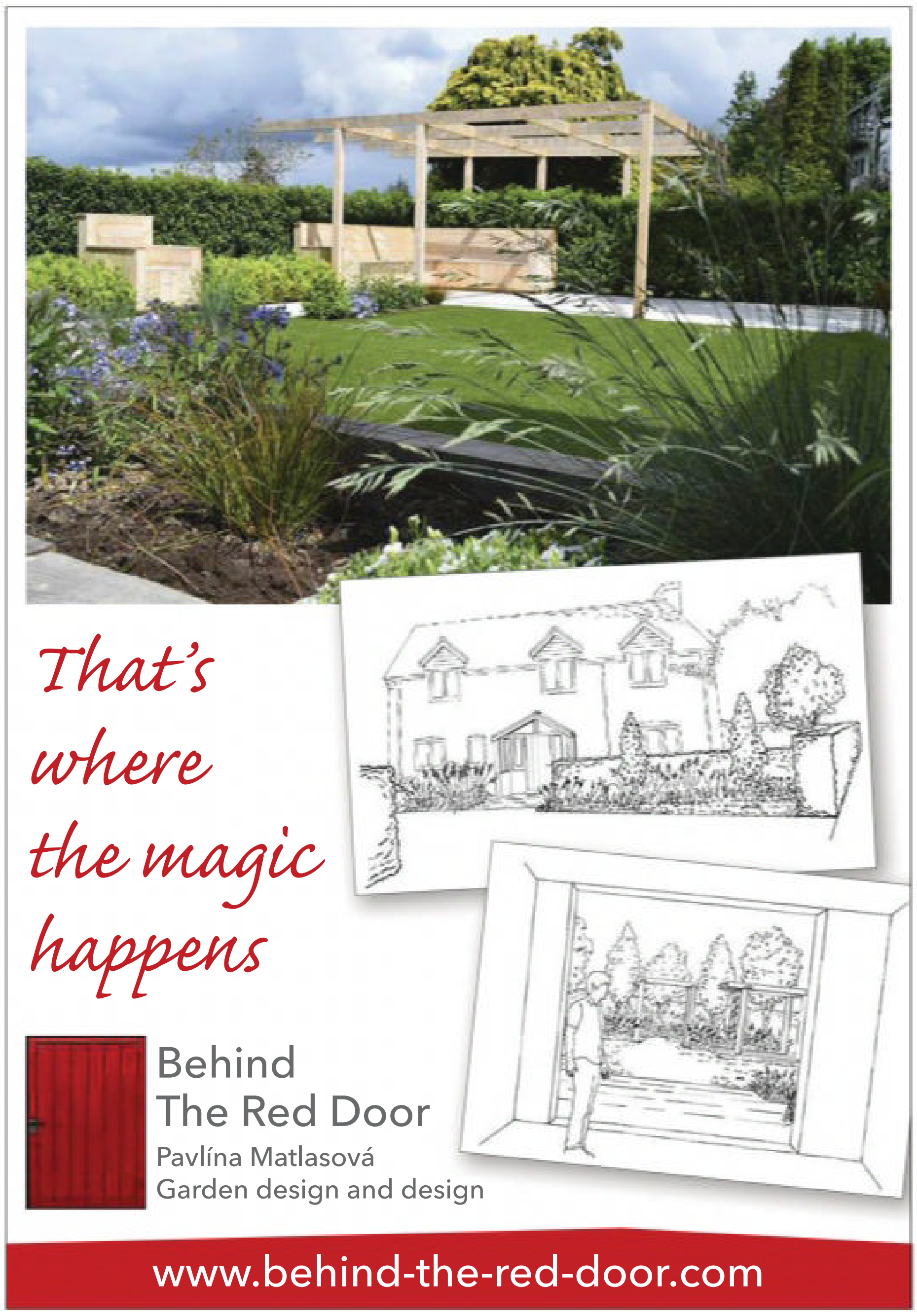

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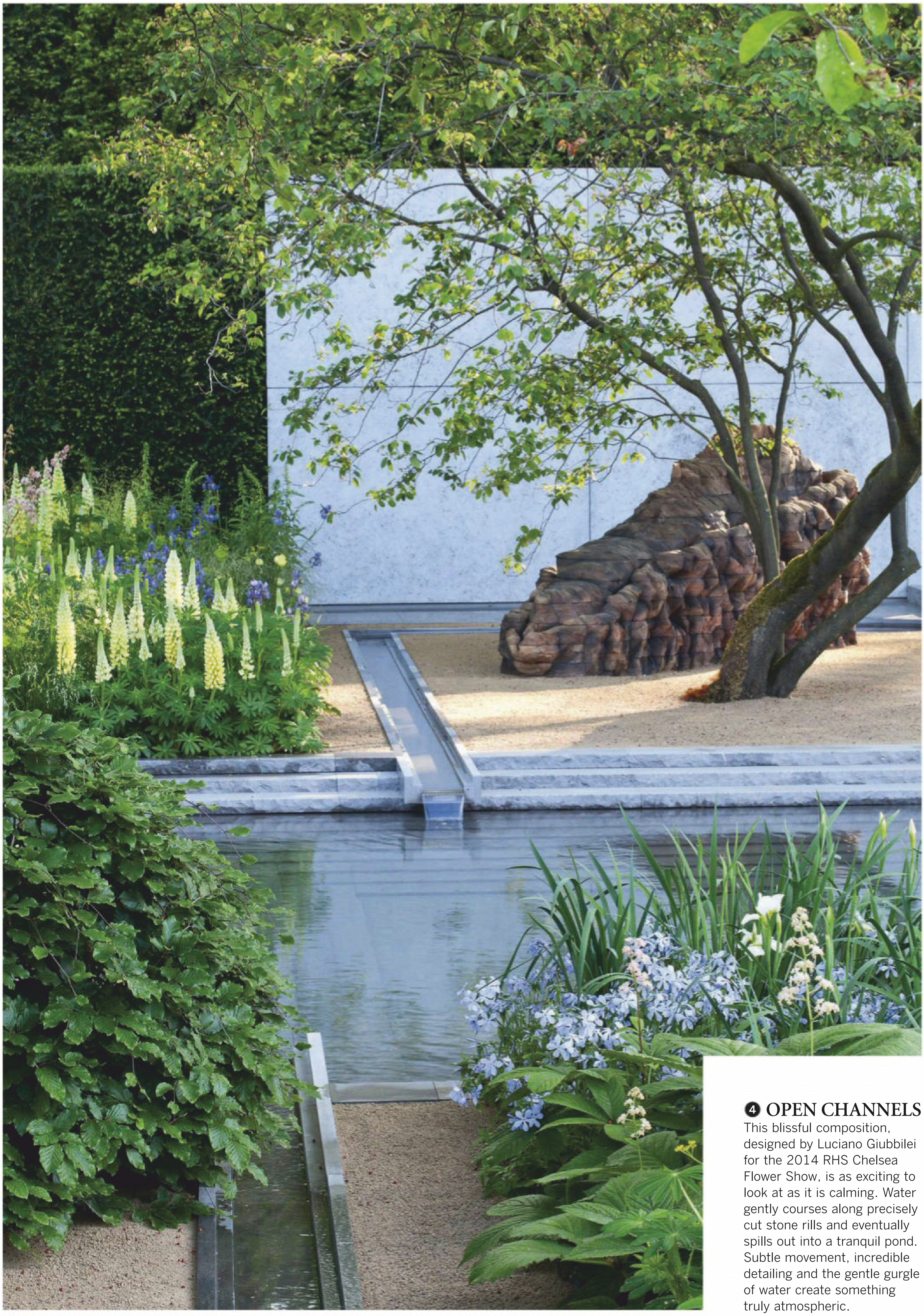

❹ OPEN CHANNELS

This blissful composition, designed by Luciano Giubbilei for the 2014 RHS Chelsea Flower Show, is as exciting to look at as it is calming. Water gently courses along precisely cut stone rills and eventually spills out into a tranquil pond. Subtle movement, incredible detailing and the gentle gurgle of water create something truly atmospheric.

4 ROB WHITWORTH / GAP PHOTOS, DESIGNER LUCIANO GIUBBILEI, SPONSOR CHAMPAGNE LAURENT-PERRIER

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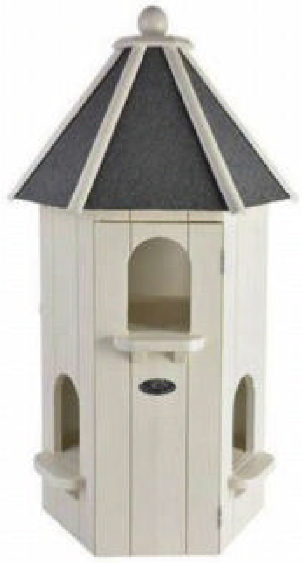

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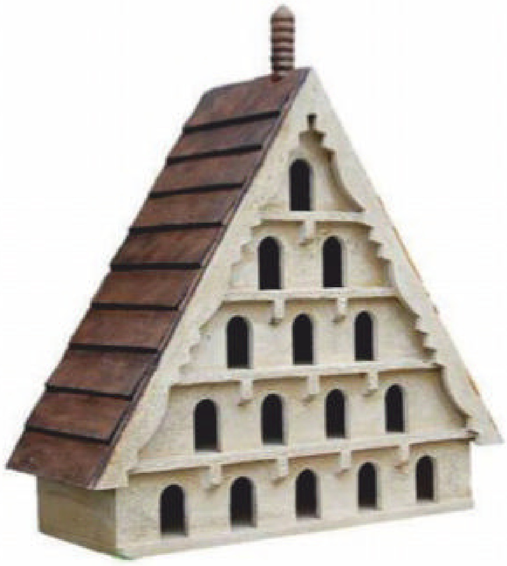

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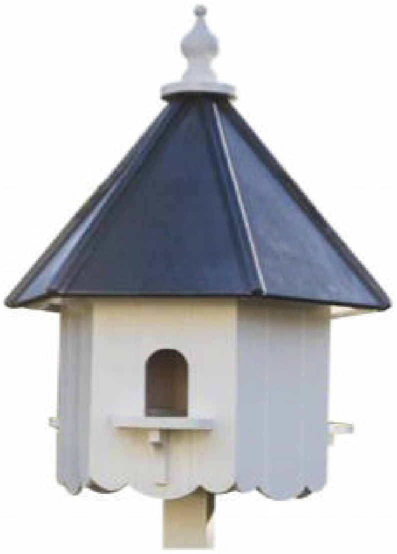

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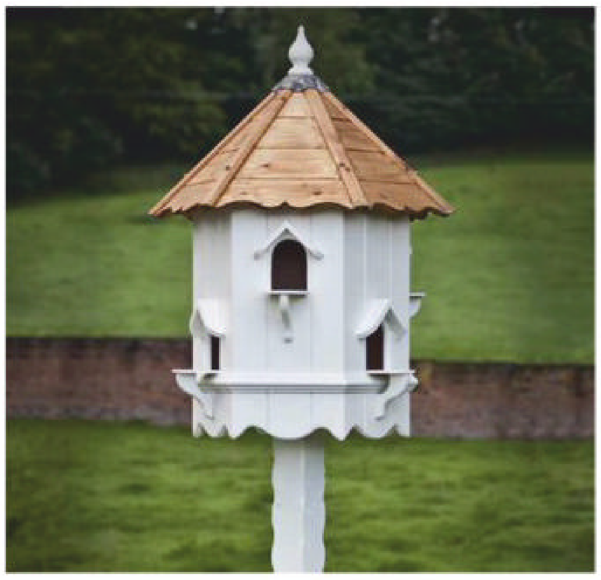

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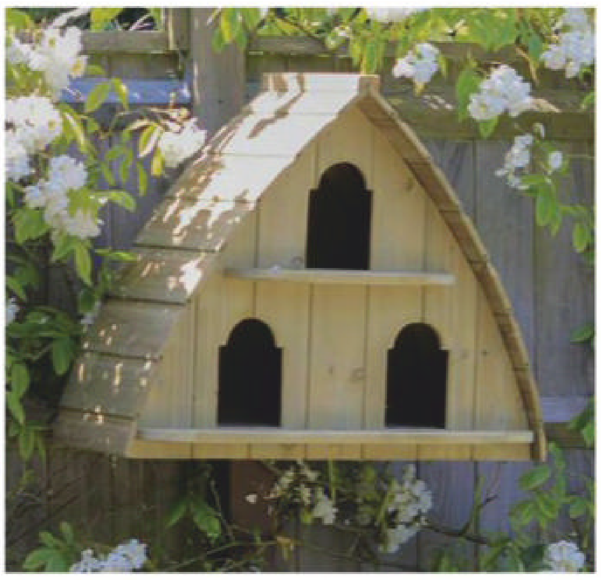

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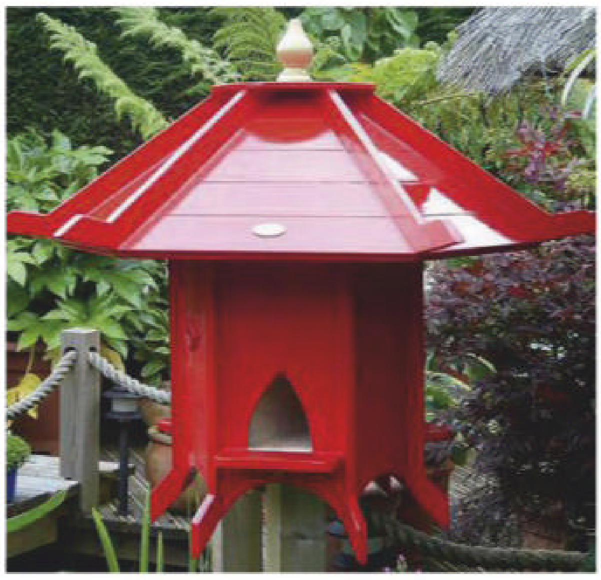

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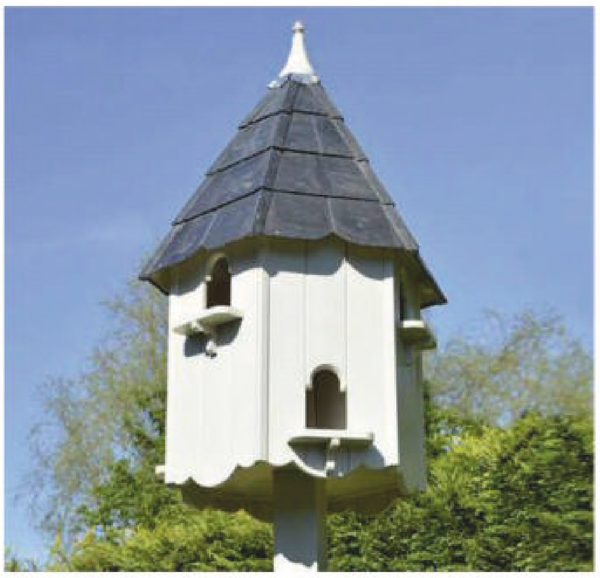

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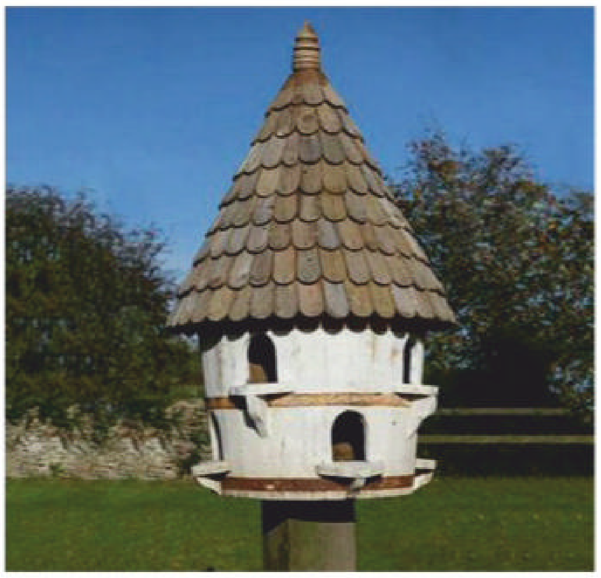

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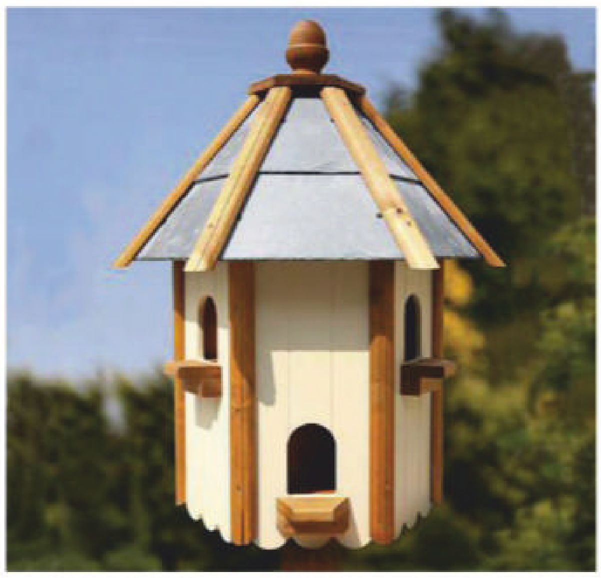

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PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

5-22 September
Garden designer Luciano Giubbilei transforms Bergamo's historic Piazza Vecchia into a green space perfect for socialising and relaxing.

18-19 September
Valfredda perennials seminars including contributions from James Hitchmough and Cassian Schmidt.

20-21 September
International Meeting of the Landscape and Garden conference with talks from nine internationally recognised designers and horticulturists.

5-22 SEPTEMBER 2019, BERGAMO, ITALY

PIONEER LANDSCAPE

Landscape Festival – I Maestri del Paesaggio: International Meeting of the Landscape and Garden

The historic city of Bergamo in northern Italy plays host to world-wide horticultural thinkers in this, the ninth International Meeting of the Landscape and Garden. The gathering is an opportunity to explore current thinking in planting and design and understand in more detail the impact we can have on landscape – and in turn its influence on us. This year's gathering of horticulture happenings and debate centres around 'pioneer landscape', those areas of pioneering and spontaneous vegetation where the relationship between man and nature is in continuous flux.

Visitors are invited to attend a range of activities and events, including the weekend conference with the opportunity to listen to a panel of influential designers and plantspeople. All events are aimed at both professional horticulturists and designers and interested public. This is a great opportunity to be part of a horticulturally inspired, international gathering.

Landscape and Garden weekend conference

Date 20-21 September **Venue** Bergamo, Italy **Cost** €150*.
Full details of the conference and all events can be found at **imaestridelpaesaggio.it**

*Special Offer – there is a discount of 30% for the first 20 *Gardens Illustrated* readers who sign up to I Maestri del Paesaggio as a new member.

ROSANNA CASTRINI, MATTEO BONALDI, GIORGIO PESENTI, MATTEO CARASSALE

LANDSCAPE & GARDEN EVENT *SUPPORTED BY* GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

The historic city of Bergamo hosts the event with installations and greenings throughout the city's public squares.

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Landscape and Garden conference: 20-21 September 2019

Barbara Corcoran (USA)
New York Botanical Garden
Vice president for Continuing and Public Education at NYBG.

Luciano Giubbilei (UK)
Award-winning, Italian-born designer whose work is grounded in Italy's classical design heritage.

Leonard Grosch (Germany)
Atelier Loidl
Landscape architect working collaboratively to achieve custom-made solutions.

James Hitchmough (UK)
The University of Sheffield
Plant specialist in ecologically based public plantings.

Antonio Perazzi (Italy)
Studio Antonio Perazzi
Landscape designer expert in naturalistic gardens.

Martin Rein-Cano (Germany)
Topotek 1
Founder of international recognised design studio and lecturer at Dessau Institute for Architecture.

Joan Roig i Durán (Spain)
Batlle i Roig
Partner in this international architecture practice, which is focused on sustainably linking the natural and built environments.

Cassian Schmidt (Germany)
Hermannshof Gardens
Landscape architect working on creating natural plant communities.

Dirk Sijmons (Netherlands)
H+N+S Landscape Architects
Design studio for green spaces from gardens to landscapes.

WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

- **Landscape School: 11-21 September 2019, Bergamo (€400)**
Students from a range of disciplines are invited to join 11 days of discussion, planning and the implementation of a project in the nearby Agricultural Ecological Park.

Separate application, includes entry to conference.
Closing date for applicants 14 August 2019.
For further information email **landschool@arketipos.org**

- **Valfredda Perennials Seminars: 18 and 19 September (€150 each seminar)**
Join an in-depth study group to focus on the design of green spaces, with a particular emphasis on perennial plantings. The seminars consist of talks and workshop activities and are aimed at professional architects, designers and gardeners with a good familiarity of plants

Taking part in the two separate seminars over the two days will be **Cassian Schmidt** from Hermannshof, joined on 18 September by German designer **Bettina Jaugstetter**, and on 19 September by **James Hitchmough** from the UK's University of Sheffield. Taking part in the conversations will be Valfredda nursery owner **Mauro Crescini** and UK designer **Annie Guilfoyle**. Landscape architect **Giacomo Guzzon** and Italian landscape architect **Beatrice Rivolta** will also join the seminars.

For details and booking go to **imaestridelpaesaggio.it/educational/dettaglio/Valfredda-Workshop/**

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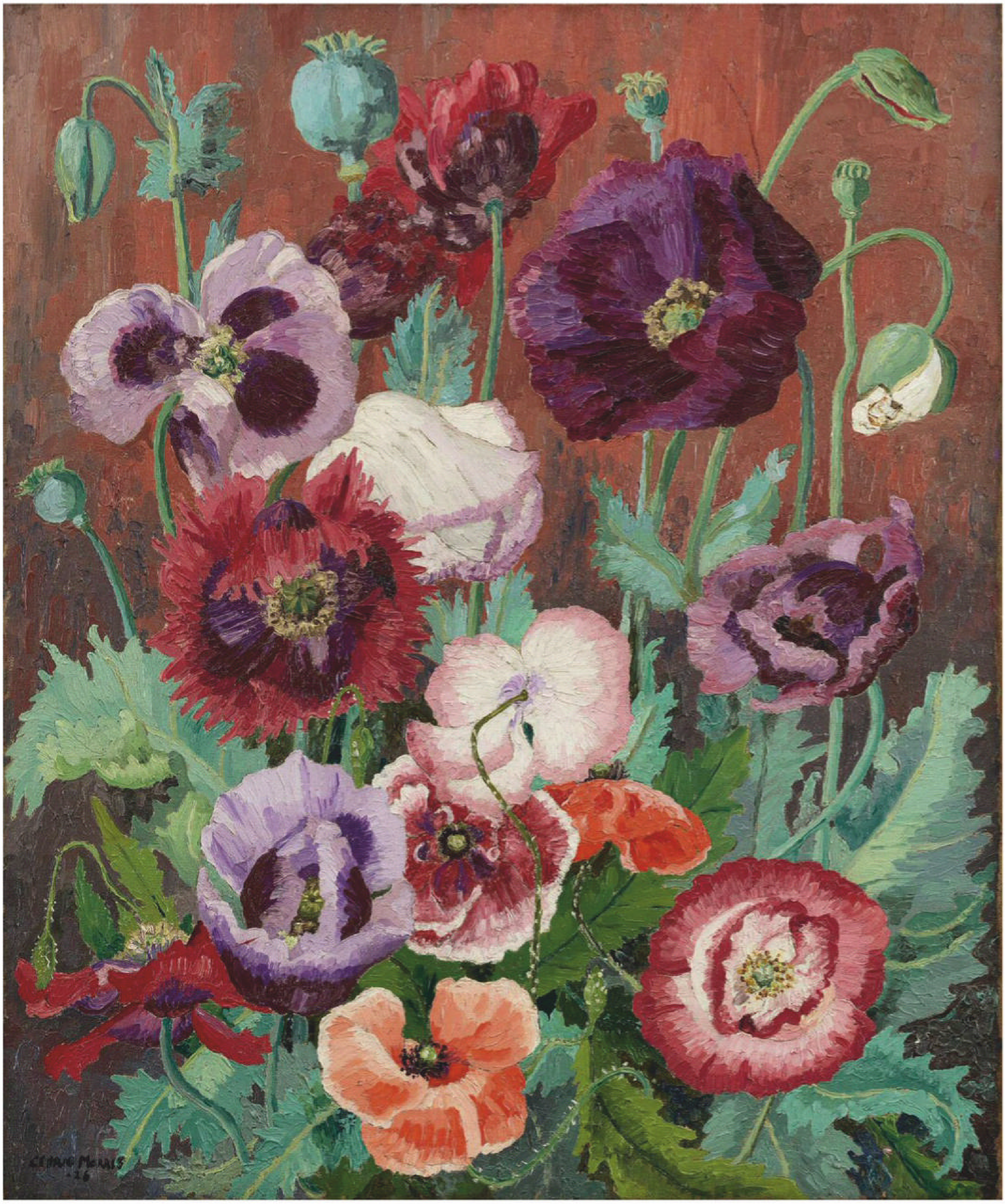
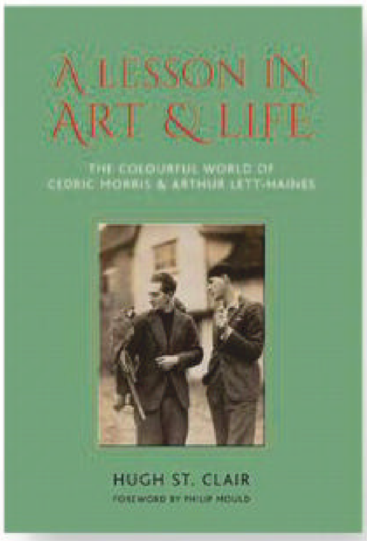
DOWNTOOLS

Book reviews, crossword, back issues



POPPIES, 1926 (OIL ON CANVAS), MORRIS, CEDRIC (1889-1982) / PRIVATE COLLECTION / © ESTATE OF CEDRIC MORRIS / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

Poppies by Cedric Morris, the influential plantsman, painter and iris breeder, whose colourful life, along with that of his partner Arthur Lett-Haines, is the subject of *A Lesson in Life & Art*, reviewed on page 108



A LESSON IN ART & LIFE: THE COLOURFUL WORLD OF CEDRIC MORRIS AND ARTHUR LETT-HAINES

by Hugh St Clair

Pimpernel Press, £30
ISBN 978-1910258361

Enjoyably revealing twin biography focusing on painter and iris expert Cedric Morris and his food-loving partner, Arthur Lett-Haines.

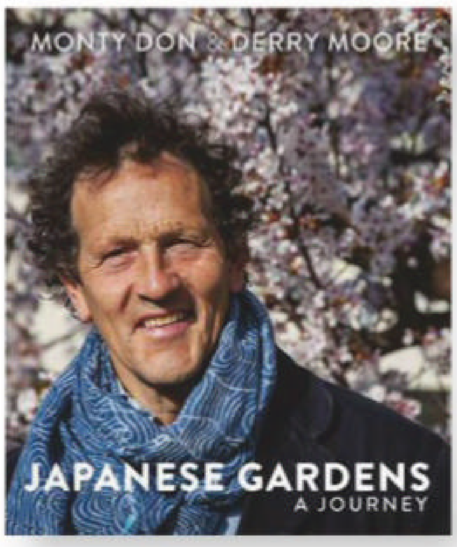
Reviewer Tim Richardson is a garden writer and critic.

Cedric Morris was one of those mid-century British painters whose work was 'rediscovered' recently – even lesser examples of his flower paintings have been on sale at prices starting at £300,000. Gardeners will know him best for the irises he bred in his garden at Benton End in Suffolk, a number of which are still in cultivation, but as this affectionate but unsentimental biography reveals, he led a rollicking artistic life for years before he discovered horticulture.

After a brief period training as a classical singer, Morris virtually eloped with Arthur Lett-Haines, known as 'Lett', whom he met on Armistice Day in 1918 (when Lett was still married). Their time in France in the mid-1920s is the most interesting section of the book, with a cast list of writers and painters including Juan Gris, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein and Ernest Hemingway. Morris even became a fashion icon, briefly feted for his floppy hats and Fairisle sweaters.

Back in England, the pair started the unconventional East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing, where artists including Lucian Freud and Maggi Hambling learned how to paint *en plein air* in the garden. The young Beth Chatto was a frequent visitor, along with cookery writer Elizabeth David, who was enthralled by Lett's cooking with garlic and chilli.

Morris discovered gardening in 1934, at the house of novelist Angus Wilson, who taught him how to propagate cultivars of *Iris* x *germanica*. Morris's own garden soon became famed for both its sensuousness and its discrimination (Morris detested 'knicker-pink' flowers), and gardeners including Vita Sackville-West were regular visitors. The garden itself is not described in detail in this book, so perhaps we must wait for a more horticulturally focused treatment to find out more.



JAPANESE GARDENS: A JOURNEY

by Monty Don,
photography by Derry Moore

Two Roads, £35
ISBN 978-1473692299

This delightful travelogue is an absorbing insight into Japanese garden design and culture; as much a spiritual journey as a horticultural one.

Reviewer Matthew Biggs is a garden writer and broadcaster.

As part of a BBC Two series screened earlier this year, television presenter and writer Monty Don visited some of Japan's most highly acclaimed gardens, trying his hand at associated art forms, such as *ikebana* and *bonsai*.

This book reveals the backstory to these visits and provides an illuminating insight not only into the history and horticulture of some remarkable gardens but also into the Japanese culture and psyche.

Admitting a youthful interest in Zen Buddhism but a lack of devotion to pursue it, Don visits a range of locations on his path to enlightenment, although not all are what you would expect. Along with the traditional, there are places where Japan meets the west, at Tatton Park in Cheshire, and the west meets Japan, at Kyu-Furukawa in Tokyo, a garden designed by Josiah Conder (1852-1920), one of the fathers of modern Japanese architecture, as well as a bonsai nursery and several contemporary gardens.

You can feel the emotion in Don's writing as he immerses himself in the unbridled joy of *Hanami*, experiences Mount Fuji at dawn and is profoundly moved by a moss chequerboard made from recycled square paving slabs at Tofuku Temple.

Divided into concise chapters, the narrative flows easily. It's like visiting each location with your own personal guide. The text is complemented by Derry Moore's images, an abundance of double-page spreads that make you feel as though you are actually there, experiencing the scene for yourself.

This book is ideal for anyone who is interested in Japanese gardens and would like to learn more. By the time you have turned the last page, you too will have reached a further stage of enlightenment.

BOOK REVIEWS

PERFECT PRACTICAL GARDENING GUIDES

by Simon Akeroyd

National Trust, £6.99 each

ISBN 978-1911358718 (Pruning)
ISBN 978-1911358725 (Lawns)
ISBN 978-1911358701 (Pots)

A series of practical gardening guides on a range of subjects, aimed at aspiring gardeners wishing to improve their horticultural prowess.

Reviewer Joshua Sparkes is head gardener at Forde Abbey.

The first three titles of this new collection of handy, pocket-sized guides offer expert advice on three common horticultural topics: pruning, pots and lawns. Written by Simon Akeroyd, an experienced head gardener at the National Trust, the collection will be expanded in the future.

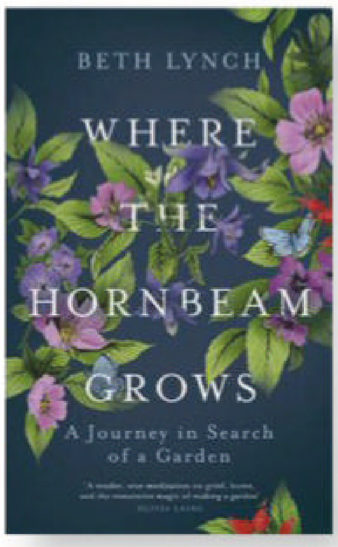
The guides are aimed mainly at budding gardeners who are ready to tackle some practical gardening tasks, from sowing lawns to designing spring pots. The chapters are packed with useful tips and cover every aspect of the topic at hand, offering both a traditional and organic approach to the creation, management and pest control of outdoor spaces.

The books are well written with a great depth of knowledge, and the author's friendly tone inspires feelings of trust regardless of the complexity of the task described. *Perfect Pruning*, for example, will inspire the reader with the confidence to tackle hedges, fruit trees and all kinds of tricky shrubs and climbers such as the sometimes confusing clematis.

Simple, coloured illustrations accompany many of the descriptions and help the reader understand the task a little better.

What is especially refreshing is that Akeroyd takes an unbiased approach and provides the reader with a range of options for carrying out gardening tasks. To get rid of pruned material, for example, he suggests either composting or burning, or even using the prunings to build a wildlife habitat.

I hope the series is a long one, as I thoroughly enjoyed the author's approachable, personable tone and found the advice in all three guides invaluable.



WHERE THE HORNBEAM GROWS: A JOURNEY IN SEARCH OF A GARDEN

by Beth Lynch

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.99
ISBN 978-1474606912

A moving memoir that explores Beth Lynch's search for contentment through the creation of several gardens as she negotiates life's hurdles.

Reviewer Hannah Gardner is a garden writer and horticulturist.

Beth Lynch is a gifted writer who weaves several complex narrative threads through this her first book. Her academic career in English literature leads her to reflect on and draw from John Milton's 17th-century, epic, biblical poem *Paradise Lost* as she untangles the complexity of her own journey.

The hornbeam of the title is a favourite plant from Lynch's rural childhood. Along with cottage-garden staples, the aquilegias, anemones and cornflowers remembered from her parents' garden, it represents her yearning to nurture memories through growing certain plants and seek solace in gardening.

This is a subtle book of evolving voices. The detailed and enthralling chapters describing Lynch's idyllic childhood garden in East Sussex and later her rustic home in the bucolic Swiss mountains of the Jura are joyous and vivid. The text is bright and buzzing with insects, bats, toads and butterflies. This atmosphere of wellbeing and happiness is, however, juxtaposed with the carefully constructed gloom and restraint of passages that reveal the strain and greyness of her experience of city living overseas. Lynch, who is on a career break when she moves with her husband to a gardenless apartment in Switzerland, feels like an interloper struggling with unfamiliar rules and social conventions while mourning the loss of her English gardens and the memories held within them.

Lynch's honest retelling of her new-found isolation is a little brutal at times, but captures the feelings of alienation and loneliness that are common to us all at some point in our lives, and her lyrical writing about the natural world transports the reader to another dimension.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

A style guide to the *outside*

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Murcia - 5 Seater Lounge Set

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Havana - Patio Dining Set

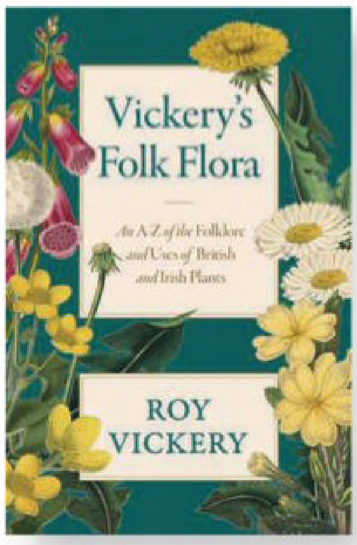
Make the most of your garden this year with the beautiful 8-seater Havana Garden Set. Comprising 8 stackable armchairs and matching 200 cm rectangular dining table, the Havana is made almost entirely from aluminium so is lightweight and easy to move – yet incredibly strong. It is also maintenance free. With fabric seat and back rest, the chairs are extremely comfortable. Normally £699, the Havana is now available at an incredible **£499**. To receive your £200 **discount quote GR29MAYA** at checkout.

Delano - 5-Seater Garden Furniture Set

The Delano patio furniture set is generous in size and seats 5 in comfort. It comprises 2 armchairs and a 3-seater bench, all with comfy cushions and a matching waterproof coffee table for storage. Contemporary in design, it is bang on trend in this season's taupe or a stunning dark grey. This garden set is made from UV stabilised resin, meaning that you can leave it out all year round and the set is 100% maintenance free. Was £499, it's now **just £299** for readers when you quote your £200 **discount code GR29MAYA.**

To receive your seasonal discount on any of these products **quote discount code** at checkout at **www.outandout.com** or call **02037 728 752** before 25.06.2019.

BOOK REVIEWS



VICKERY'S FOLK FLORA: AN A-Z OF THE FOLKLORE AND USES OF BRITISH AND IRISH PLANTS
by Roy Vickery

Orion, £30
ISBN 978-1474604628

A wonderfully rich and vivid reference work for discovering the folklore behind Britain's native, naturalised and cultivated plants.

Reviewer Jane Perrone is a freelance garden writer.

You may know it as sorrel, but *Rumex acetosa* may be referred to as bitterdabs in Northern Ireland, sarock in Scotland, cuckoo's meat in Cheshire and smart-ass in Shropshire. So I discovered on opening *Vickery's Folk Flora* at a random page, only to find myself poring over an array of colourful local plant names.

What is a folk flora, exactly? It is a dictionary of plants of the British Isles and the customs and superstitions that surround them, not so much a historical document as a collection of modern beliefs about, and uses for, plants – or, as Vickery calls it, 'plant-lore'.

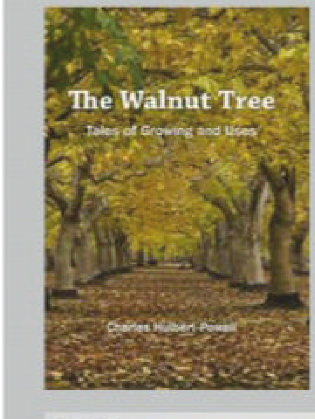
Vickery, a botanist at the Natural History Museum in London, has been collecting stories about the traditional uses of plants since the early 1970s. With more than 7,000 pieces of information from 2,000 contributors, this is a rich tapestry of stories passed down via word of mouth, not gleaned from reference books, scientists and officialdom.

All Vickery's research is condensed into a weighty tome full of fascinating superstitions, customs and medicinal cures. While I wouldn't recommend testing out whether boiled ivy leaves really work as a cure for burns and eczema, or treating jaundice with honeysuckle bark, it is fascinating to read that the stems of cow parsley and Japanese knotweed both make excellent pea shooters. And it was considered good luck if, when shelling peas, the first pod contained nine seeds. Who knew?

This isn't a glossy coffee-table book but a rich reference text with limited photographs, set out alphabetically, dictionary-style. While it is definitely entertaining enough to be read cover to cover, it's also perfect for dipping into or looking up specific plants to add to your understanding of their place in our culture.

Other books

This month's selection spans flora and fauna both great and small, and gives advice on plant care and flower arranging.



THE WALNUT TREE
by Charles Hulbert-Powell
Unicorn, £30
ISBN 978-1911604570
An all-encompassing catalogue of the walnut tree, from its early cultivation to uses for its timber and nuts, and the representation of the walnut in art and culture.

ANNA POTTER
The Flower Fix

THE FLOWER FIX: MODERN ARRANGEMENTS FOR A DAILY DOSE OF NATURE
by Anna Potter
White Lion, £20
ISBN 978-1781317884
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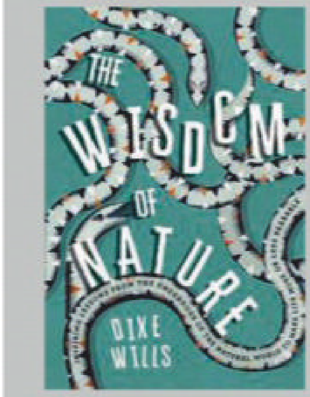

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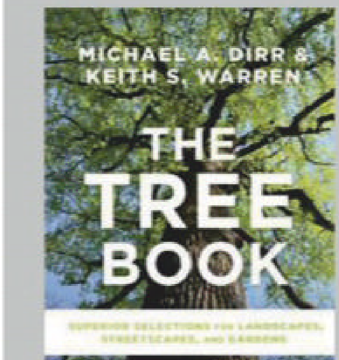

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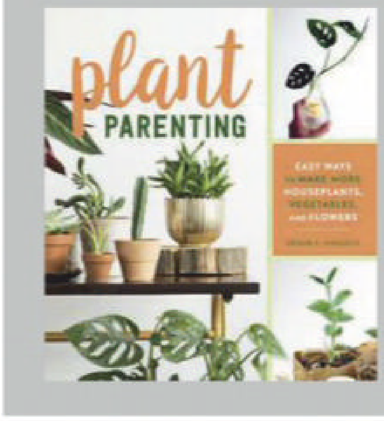

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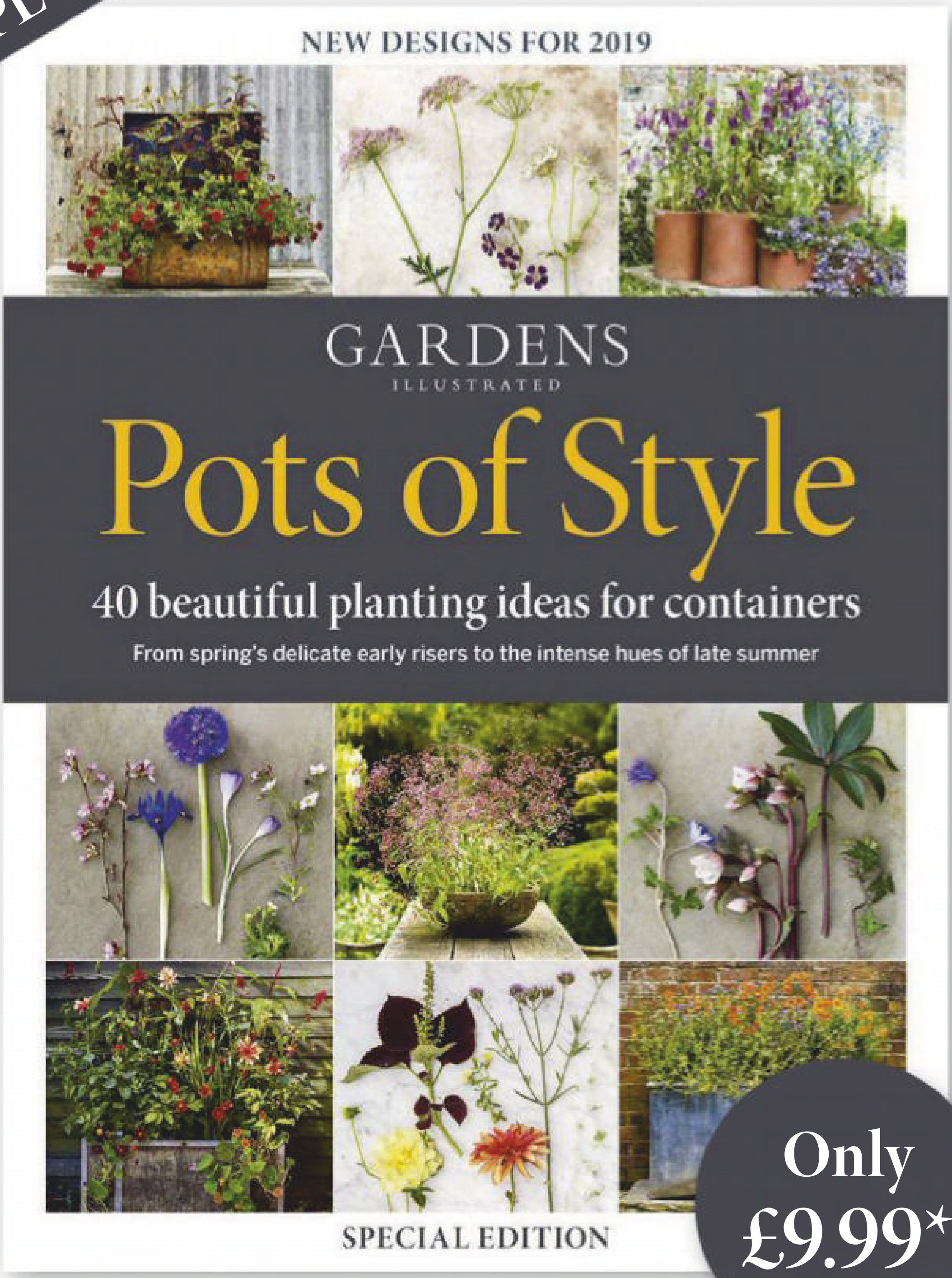

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Crossword

1	2		3		4	■	5		6		7		8	
■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■
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ACROSS

1 Genus of plants in buttercup family – Aphrodite's love (6)

5 Genus and name of mat-forming shrub produced from bare heap (8)

9 *Pachysandra terminalis* is an example of a __-forming plant (3)

10 Woodland primula, aka great cowslip (5)

11 A yellow-flowering tree magnolia – break up soil (4)

12 An RHS garden location (emblematic flower on heathland) (8)

14 Plantsman 'Chinese' Wilson's first name sounds sincere (6)

15 Sliding window frames as she's adjusted (6)

17 Common name for shrubs of *Sarcoccoca* genus – candy container? (5,3)

19 Coral-coloured pompom dahlia – sort of blue arcs (8)

22/23 Common name for flowers in *Mimulus* genus (6,6)

25 *Tagetes* with rusty red flowers; also, a red/black moth (8)

27 Genus of 'Chilean guava' in myrtle family… included in rug – nice! (4)

28 Name of a yellow and brown salvia – between red and green? (5)

29 See 24 down

30 Hydrangea cultivars with flattened flowerheads (8)

31 Ivy genus, a little impoverished, eradicated (6)

DOWN

2 A named elephant's ears *Bergenia* and a Disney character (5)

3 Eg hazel's fruit (3)

4 Runners developing new plantlets – no slots, sadly (7)

5 Hardy, pale-lilac verbena – 'North Star' (7)

6 Well-satisfied… with this frilly, double, salmon/white narcissus (7)

7 __ Ballard, world-famous hellebore breeder (5)

8 A red-hot poker that's yellow, like a common butterfly (9)

13 Pale-pink rambling rose in thicket, Heligan (5)

16 Genus of plants called columbine and granny's bonnets (9)

18 Upright, deep-pink lobelia – thank you, National Indoor Arena! (5)

20 Term describing 'saw-toothed' leaves (7)

21 Japanese laurels – USA/Cuba hybrid (7)

22 A smooth-skinned, succulent celeriac – Emperor? (7)

24/29 across With Tom he composed this name of a cream-flowering hydrangea (5,4)

26 William Waldorf __, US millionaire who restored Hever Castle and created its gardens (5)

29 Soft, wet earth (3)

Solutions to this month's crossword will be printed next month

SOLUTIONS TO JUNE'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS 6 Aurea **8** Plantsmen **10** Tussock **11** Tumbler **12** Net **13** Ashes **14** Klein **15** Veronicastrum **20** Keels **22** Style **23** Sky **24** Bashful **26** Striata **28** Anthurium **29/25** Petit four.

DOWN 1 Martini **2** Taro **3** Nantes **4** Atom **5** Amelie **7** Rosette **8** Pak choi **9** Nerine **13** Aloes **14** Katie **16** Alyssum **17** Upstart **18** Akebia **19** Lycaste **21** Ensata **22** Salvia **27** Rape.

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Nursery Collection

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ORNAMENTAL TREE
NURSERIES
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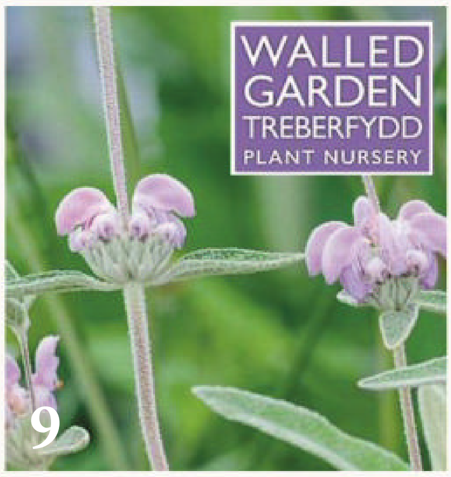

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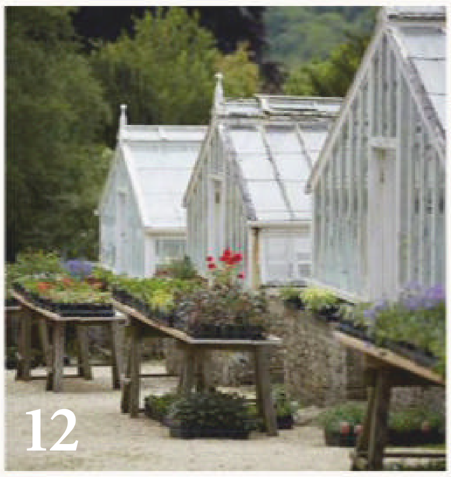
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autumnasters.co.uk | 01684 540416

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rvroger.co.uk | 01751 472226

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norfolkherbs.co.uk | 01362 860812

4. WOOTTENS OF WENHASTON

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woottensplants.com | 01502 478258

5. EDULIS NURSERY

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ornamental-trees.co.uk | 01943 660870

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beethamnurseries.co.uk | 015395 63630

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walledgardentreberfydd.com

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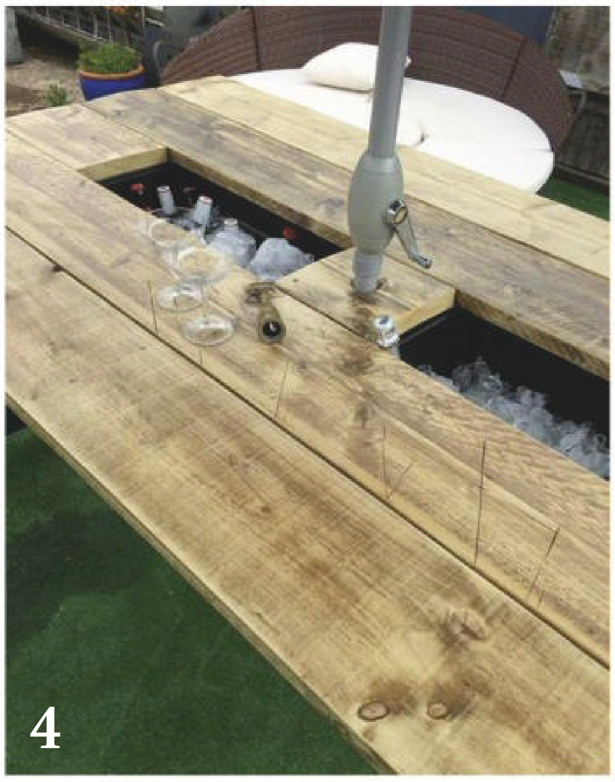

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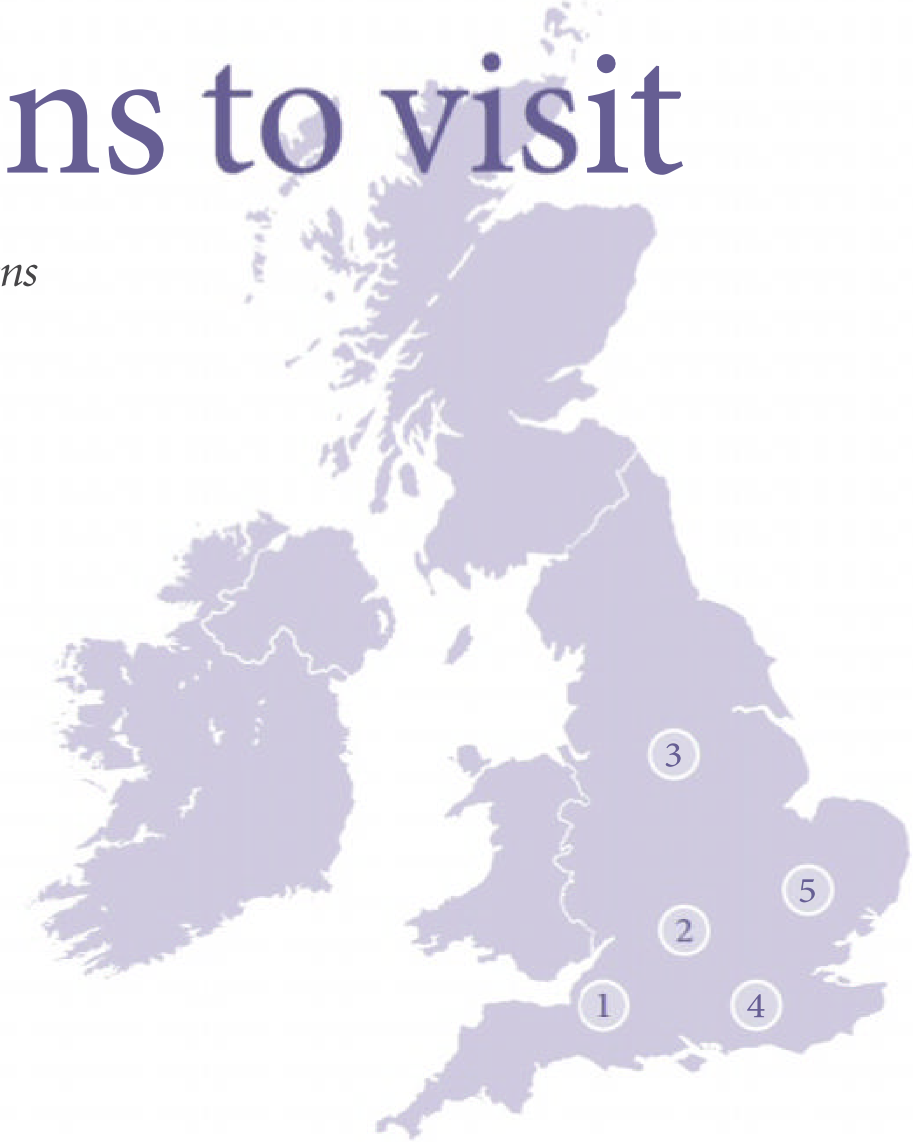

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2 WATERPERRY GARDENS

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Oxfordshire OX33 1LA | 01844 339226 | waterperrygardens.co.uk

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3 YORK GATE, ONE OF PERENNIAL'S GARDENS

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Leeds, West Yorkshire LS16 8DW | 0113 267 824 | yorkgate.org.uk

4 NYMANS

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West Sussex RH17 6EB | 01444 405250 | nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans

5 ANGELSEY ABBEY, GARDENS AND LODE MILL

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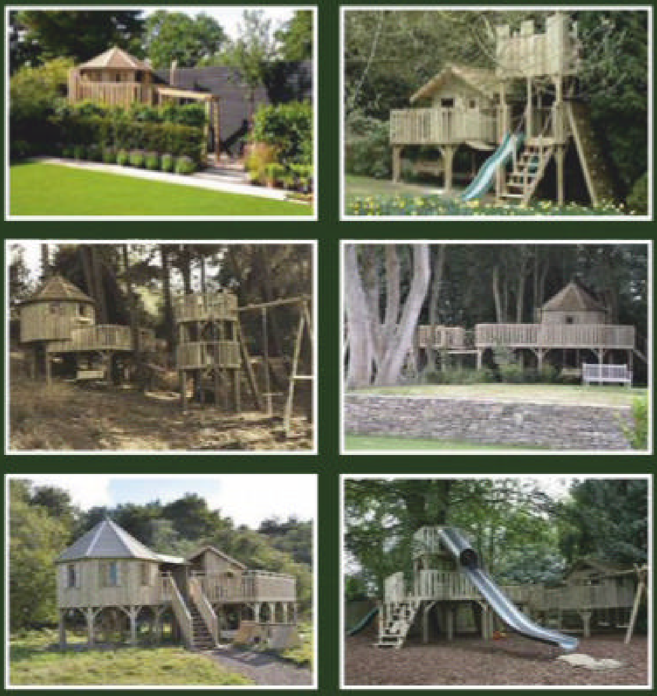

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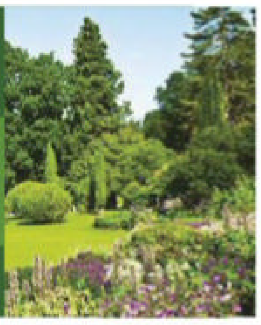

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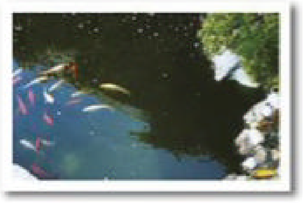

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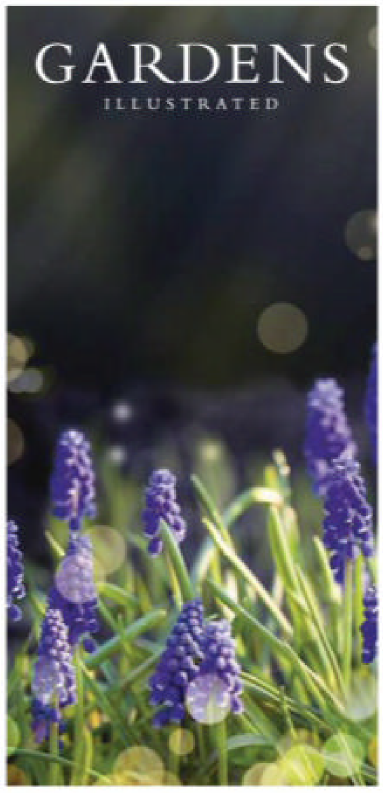

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11am-4pm, Adm £5 Fair & Garden.
Chawton, Alton, Hampshire GU34 1SJ

SUNDAY 25TH AUG
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11am-4pm, Adm £2.
Water Lane, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 5DH

SUNDAY 15TH SEPT
Autumn Plant Fair, Borde Hill Garden,
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Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath,
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www.plant-fairs.co.uk
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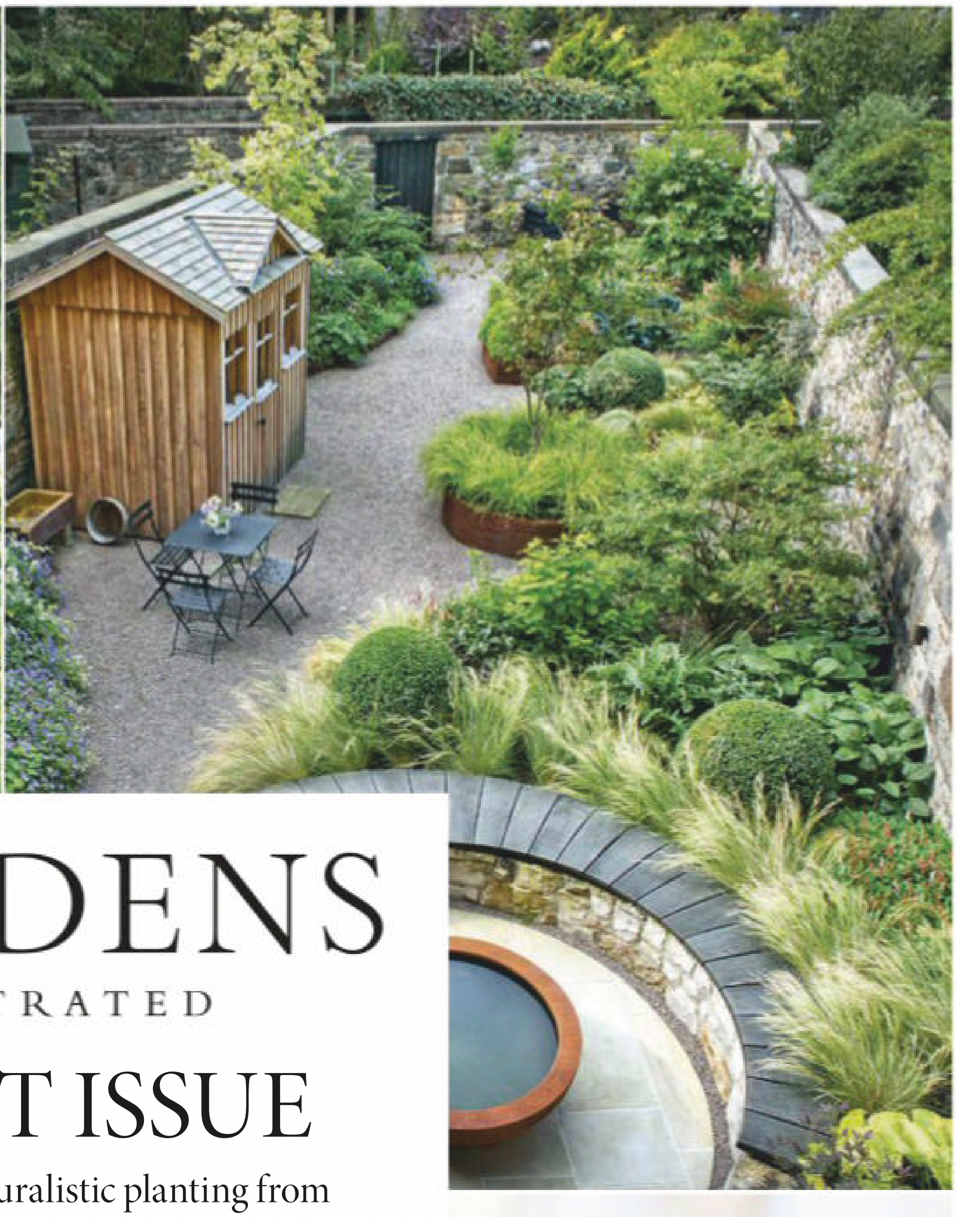

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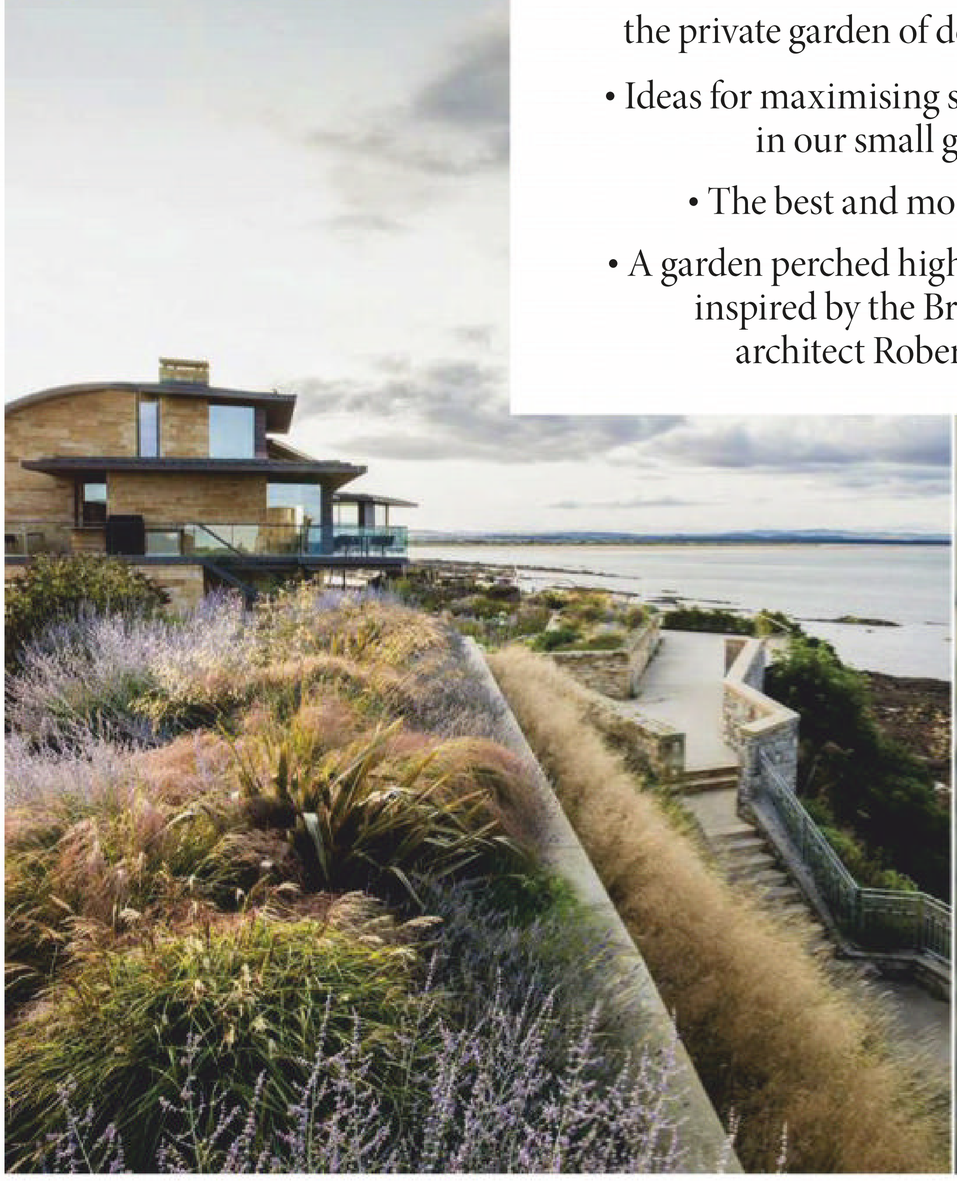
AUGUST ISSUE

- A masterclass in naturalistic planting from the private garden of designer Nigel Dunnett
- Ideas for maximising style in minimum space in our small garden special
- The best and most elegant fuchsias
- A garden perched high above the Firth of Tay, inspired by the Brazilian landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx



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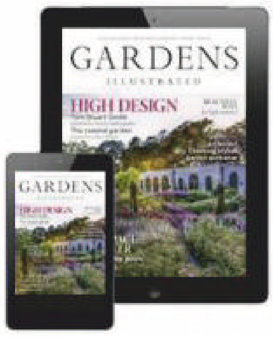

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WORDS **JESS SNOWBALL**
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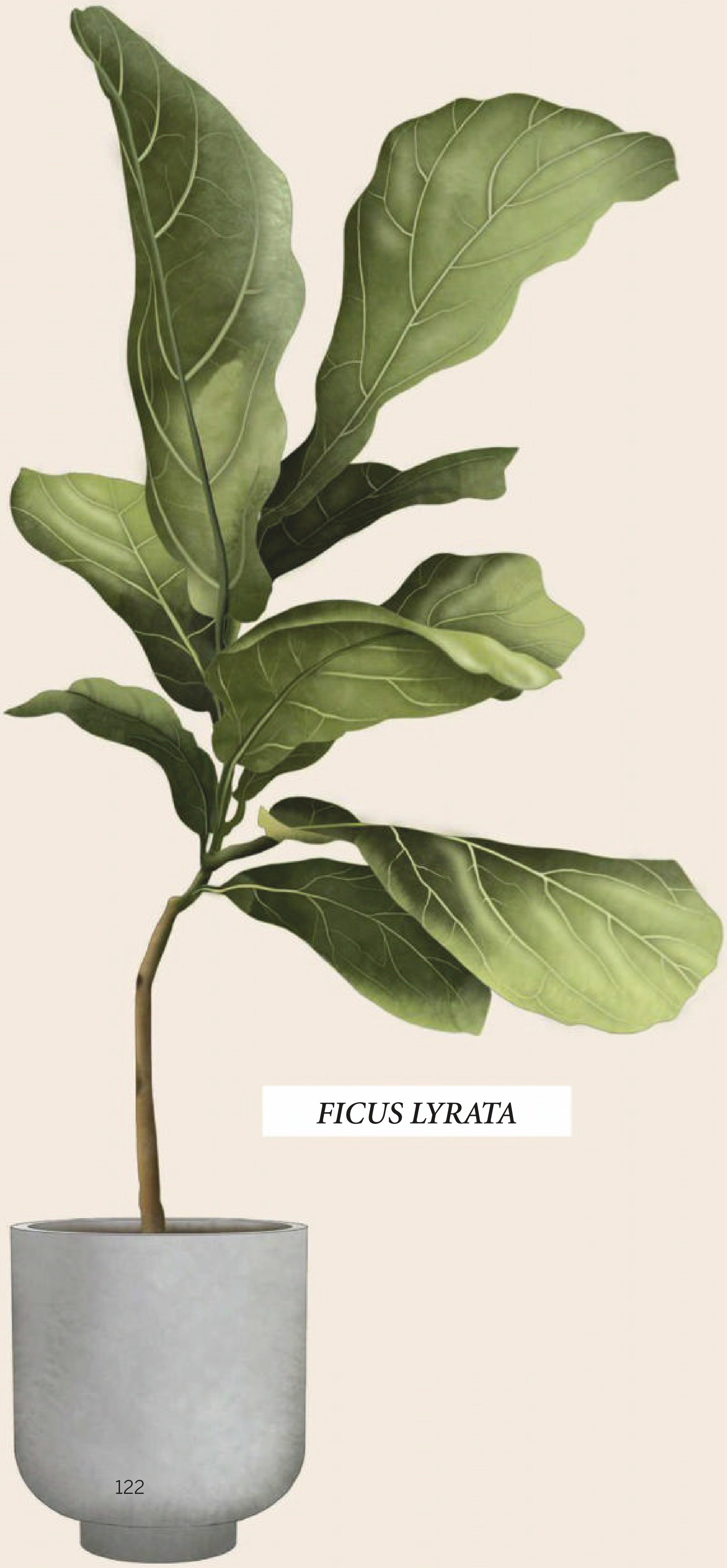

FICUS LYRATA

I first started growing tropical flora after inheriting a weeping fig, *Ficus benjamina*. The genus *Ficus* is a group of woody tropical plants found in lowland forests of both the northern and southern hemispheres. Some deciduous species grow at higher elevations but the genus is widely distributed and diverse within tropical rainforests. Plants within the genus vary in shape and size, from enormous trees to tiny-leafed vines and climbers. The trees can reach heights of more than 30m in the wild. Some strangler *Ficus* species develop aerial roots that turn into additional trunks when they reach the ground, providing shelter and food to the benefit of forest fauna and of ecosystems.

Ficus are excellent and popular houseplants offering a huge variety with extraordinary leaf shapes, textures and bark. They are easy to grow, even for those who find caring for plants indoors a little more challenging, as despite their tropical origins, they thrive in low humidity and can tolerate inconsistent light. Many species will add height and volume to your space indoors as well as charming character.

Ficus benjamina is one of the bushier *Ficus* species. It is native to a vast swathe of countries, stretching from India to Australia. It takes its common name, the weeping fig, from its simple glossy, ovate leaves that are mid to dark green, and arranged alternately along drooping branches.

Ficus lyrata, better known as the fiddle-leaf fig, originates from the African rainforests of Liberia to Gabon. It is a broader-leaved, evergreen tree that can reach up to 30m in its natural habitat. Its leathery, dark-green, lyre-shaped leaves are fairly unusual and have been likened by some to a violin – hence the name fiddle leaf. The large *F. lyrata* leaves can grow to a 30cm and they have pale-green, yellowish veins. If you want a statement plant to impress, then the fiddle-leaf fig is for you.

Ficus elastica, more commonly known as the Indian rubber plant is native to parts of Southeast Asia, and when cultivated indoors will reach 2.5m. Its glossy oval leaves have added to its popularity as a houseplant. You'll need to clean them from time to time with damp cloth to keep their shine. Be careful if you have pets in the house as the plant, along with all other *Ficus* species, is toxic to both cats and dogs.

Cultivation

As *Ficus* originate from the tropical and temperate regions of Asia, Africa and America they will grow to their best in bright, filtered light. Be aware that *F. benjamina* can be quite sensitive to changing light and temperature conditions and will shed its leaves as a result. *F. benjamina* will drop its leaves annually as the days shorten but new leaves grow back each spring.

Plant *Ficus* in a free-draining, moisture-retentive media, such as John Innes No.3, with added grit and add a generous top layer of grit or bark. Water generously throughout the growing season and less often in winter. Plants will tolerate the occasional missed watering but their growth will slow as a result and leaves will turn yellow. During the plants' active growth period remember to feed every two weeks with a balanced NPK liquid fertiliser, and then reduce this to once a month at half strength in winter.

If you notice your plant's compost drying out more quickly than usual it is it likely that the plant needs repotting into a larger container. Gently tease out roots if they have become compacted and are circling the bottom of the pot.

Pruning improves shape and inhibits growth. *Ficus* respond well to pruning, which you should do when the plants are in active growth. Using sharp secateurs, take out any damaged or dead material, cutting horizontally just above a node. Cut back stems that are too tall and thin overcrowded, crossing branches to encourage air circulation, including removing any larger leaves. Larger specimens can grow rapidly towards light sources so a trim of their long lateral stems can be beneficial to achieve balance. □

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